



US007051446B2

(12) **United States Patent**  
**Moss**

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 7,051,446 B2**  
(45) **Date of Patent:** **May 30, 2006**

(54) **CONSTRUCTION LAYOUT AND ANGLE MEASUREMENT TOOL**

(76) Inventor: **John B. Moss**, 4520 Rhonda Sue, Imperial, MO (US) 63052

(\*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **10/915,761**

(22) Filed: **Aug. 11, 2004**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2005/0257390 A1 Nov. 24, 2005

**Related U.S. Application Data**

(60) Provisional application No. 60/573,967, filed on May 24, 2004.

(51) **Int. Cl.**  
**B43L 7/00** (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **33/429; 33/423; 33/414**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** ..... 33/429, 33/365, 391-392, 404, 407-409, 413-414, 33/418, 420-421, 423-424, 426, 465, 471, 33/474, 476, 481, 492, 534, 538  
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

1,382,923	A *	6/1921	Loeschner	33/350
1,451,572	A *	4/1923	Green	33/423
2,524,596	A *	10/1950	Kamp	33/413
3,350,784	A *	11/1967	Schabel	33/423
4,189,844	A	2/1980	Riggins, Sr.	
4,731,933	A *	3/1988	Cope	33/414
4,805,315	A *	2/1989	Nesbitt	33/535

5,170,568	A	12/1992	Wright	
5,239,762	A	8/1993	Grizzell	
5,727,325	A *	3/1998	Mussell	33/429
6,122,834	A	9/2000	Rester	
6,243,961	B1	6/2001	Winski	
6,260,283	B1	7/2001	Abernathy et al.	
6,293,028	B1	9/2001	Sylvia	
D454,080	S	3/2002	Aguilar et al.	
6,374,504	B1	4/2002	Graham	
6,408,529	B1	6/2002	Hodges	
6,467,179	B1	10/2002	Wolf	
6,494,015	B1	12/2002	Critchlow	
6,578,278	B1 *	6/2003	Siefert	33/429
6,622,394	B1	9/2003	Werner et al.	
6,640,453	B1 *	11/2003	Eisenmenger	33/283
6,688,014	B1	2/2004	Allemand	
6,725,555	B1 *	4/2004	Moore	33/423
6,725,556	B1 *	4/2004	Graham	33/474
2002/0144420	A1	10/2002	Mora	
2003/0056383	A1	3/2003	Siefert	
2003/0204963	A1	11/2003	Siefert	
2004/0006881	A1	1/2004	Shapiro	

\* cited by examiner

*Primary Examiner*—Christopher W. Fulton

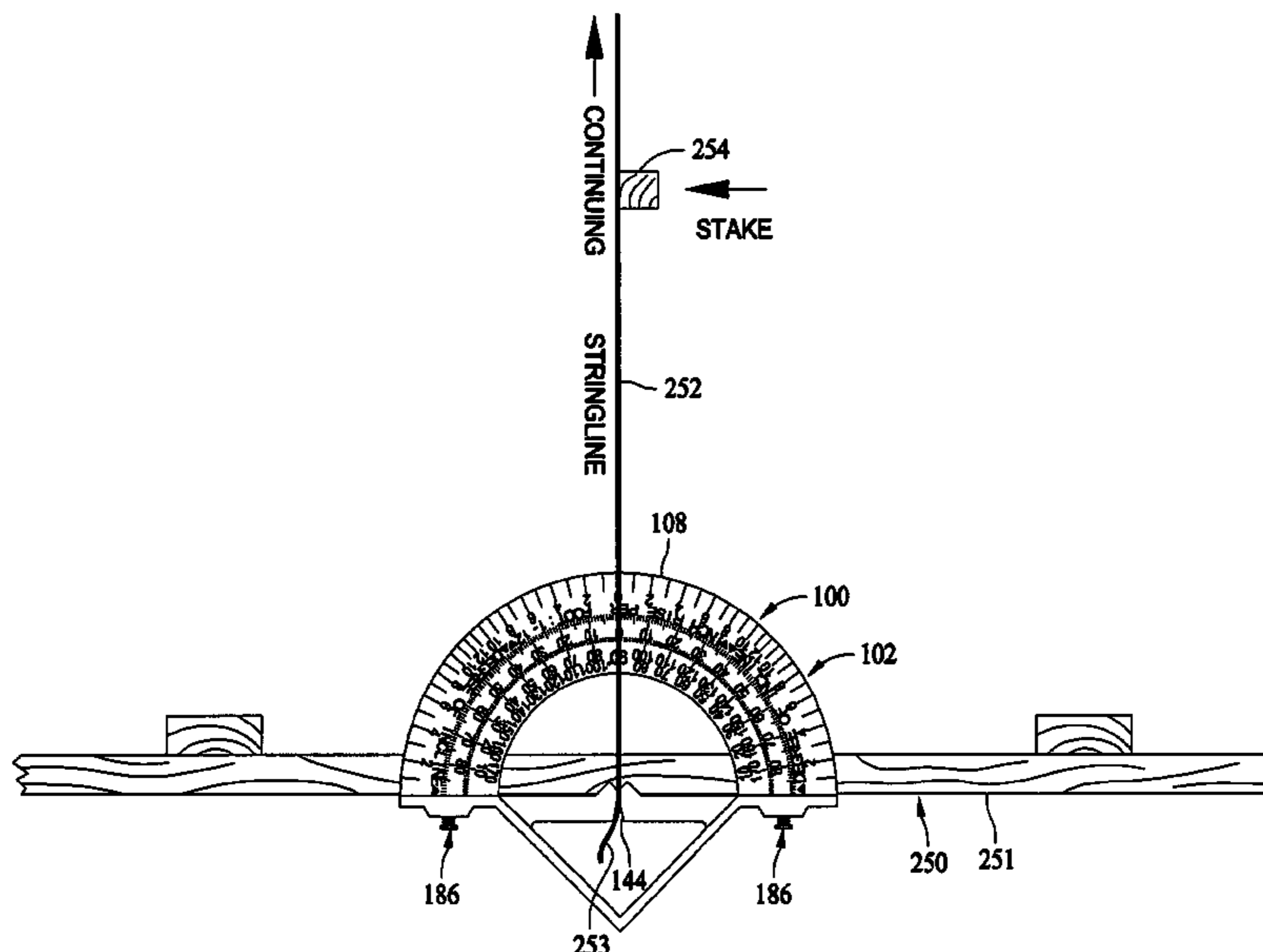
*Assistant Examiner*—Tania Courson

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Armstrong Teasdale LLP

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A construction layout and angle measurement tool includes opposite working sides having unique indicia for establishing angles from side edges or corners of building materials. When used with a reference line, and when attached to the workpiece, the tool allows site layout and evaluation by only one person. The tool may be mounted on vertical, horizontal, and inclined workpieces. Angles are determined and evaluated directly with the tool while avoiding mathematical computation.

**26 Claims, 17 Drawing Sheets**



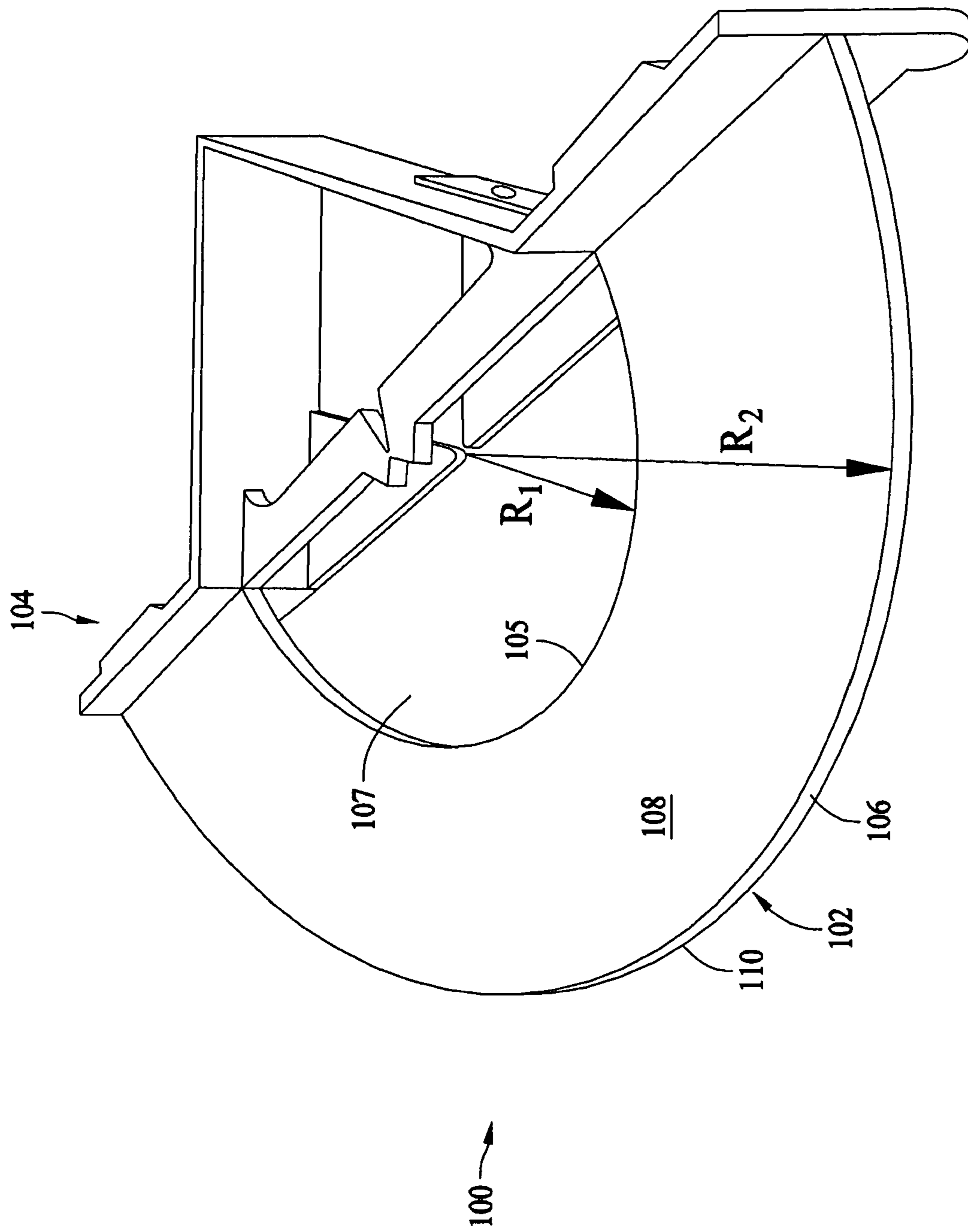
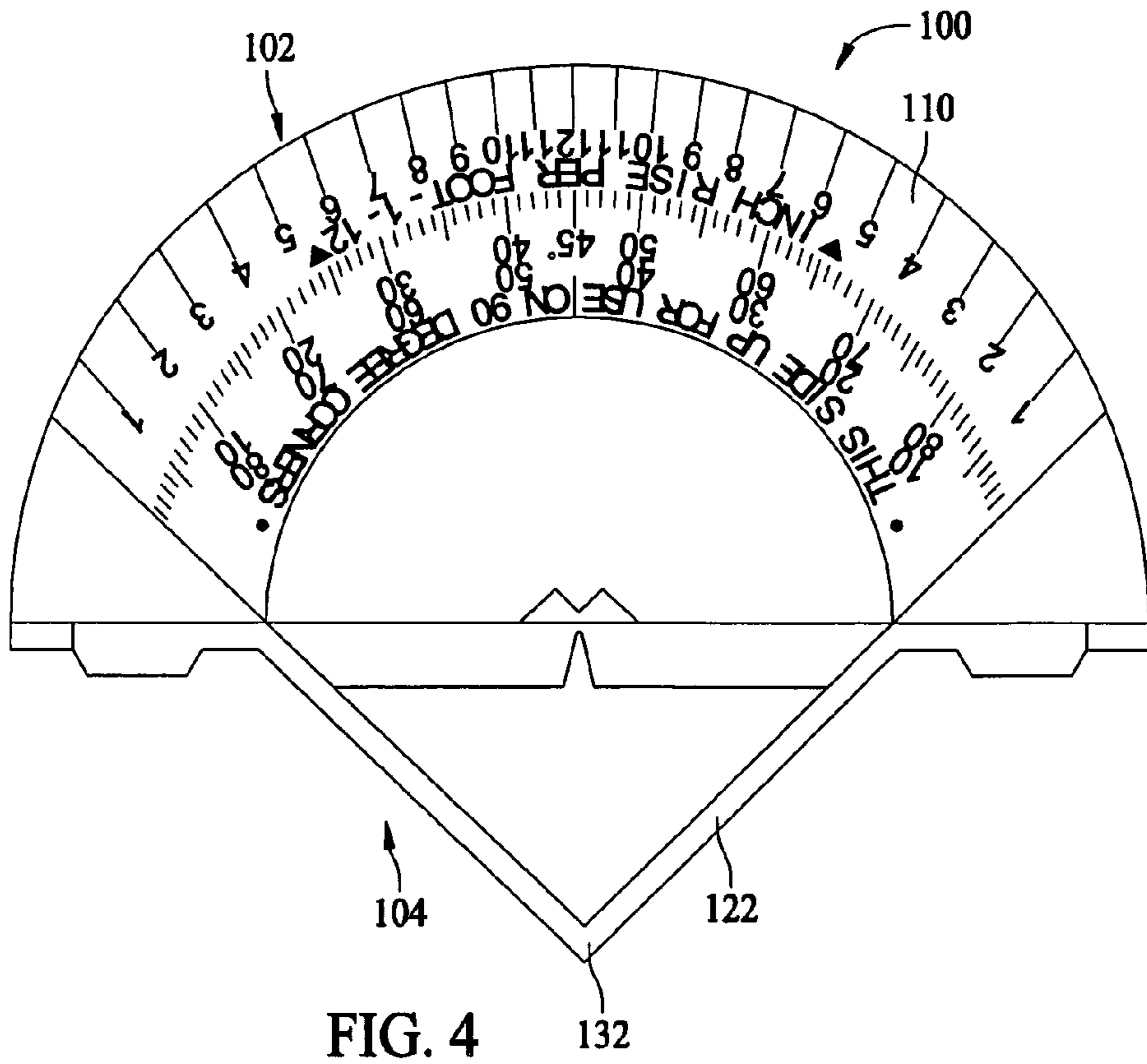
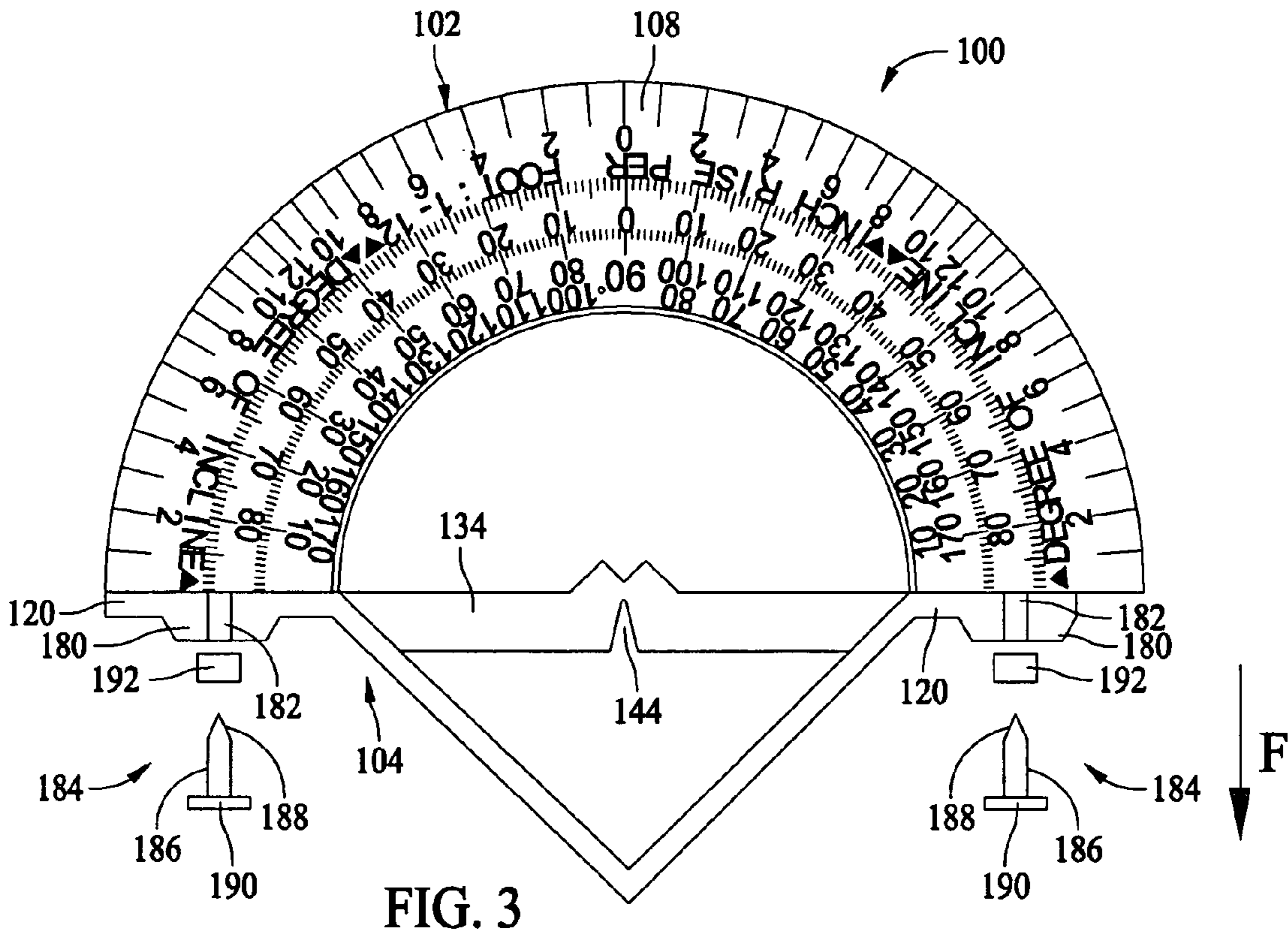


FIG. 1







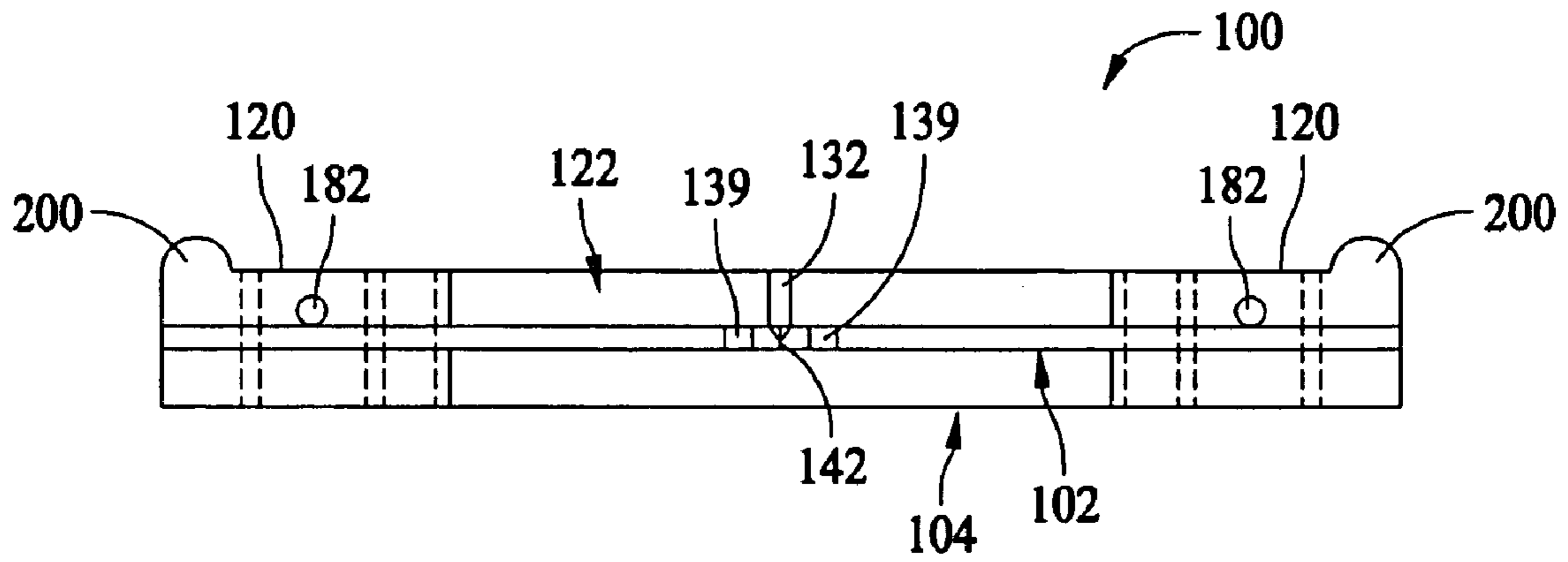


FIG. 5

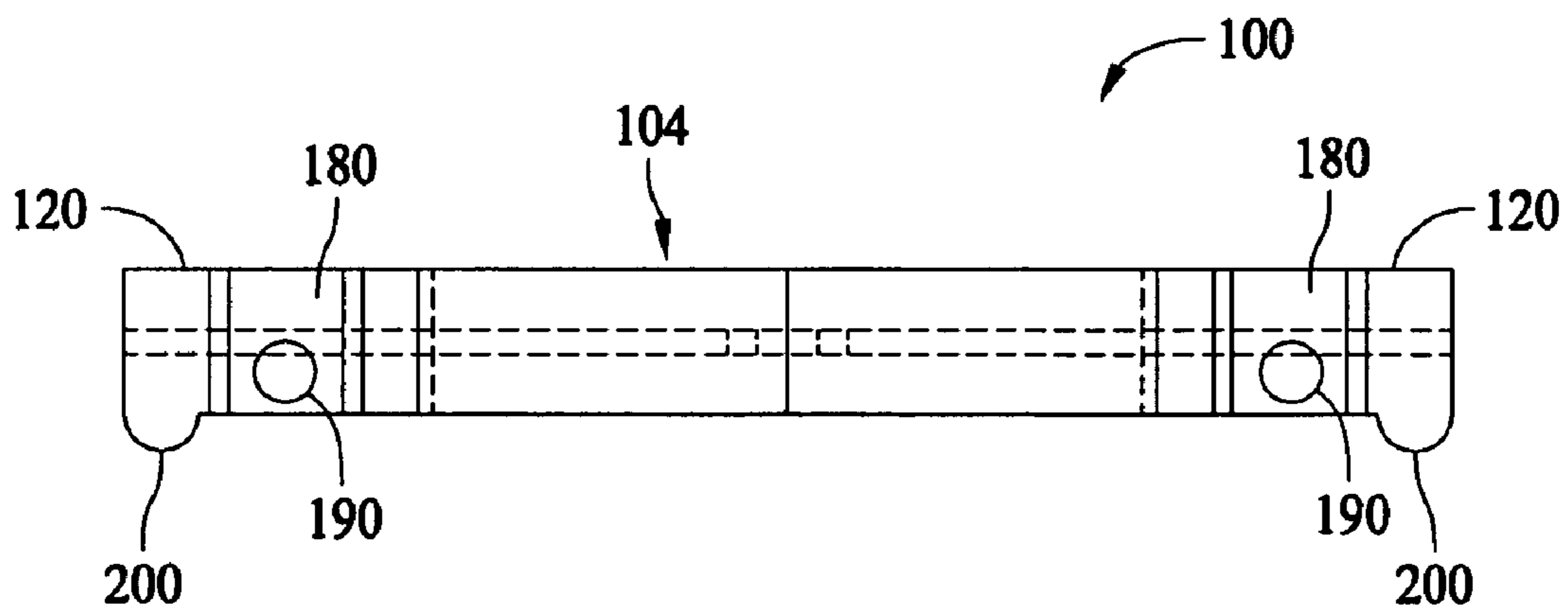


FIG. 6

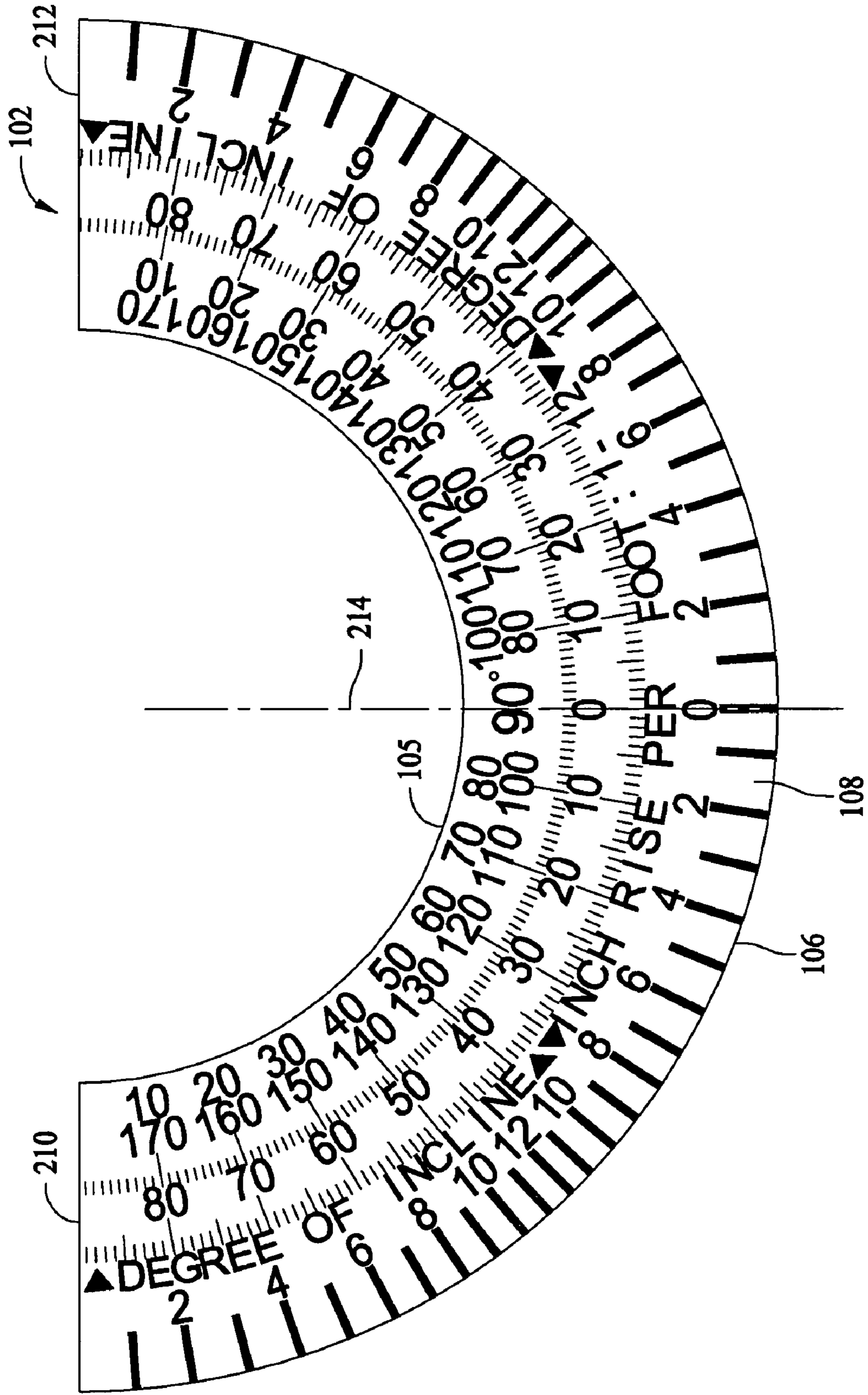


FIG. 7

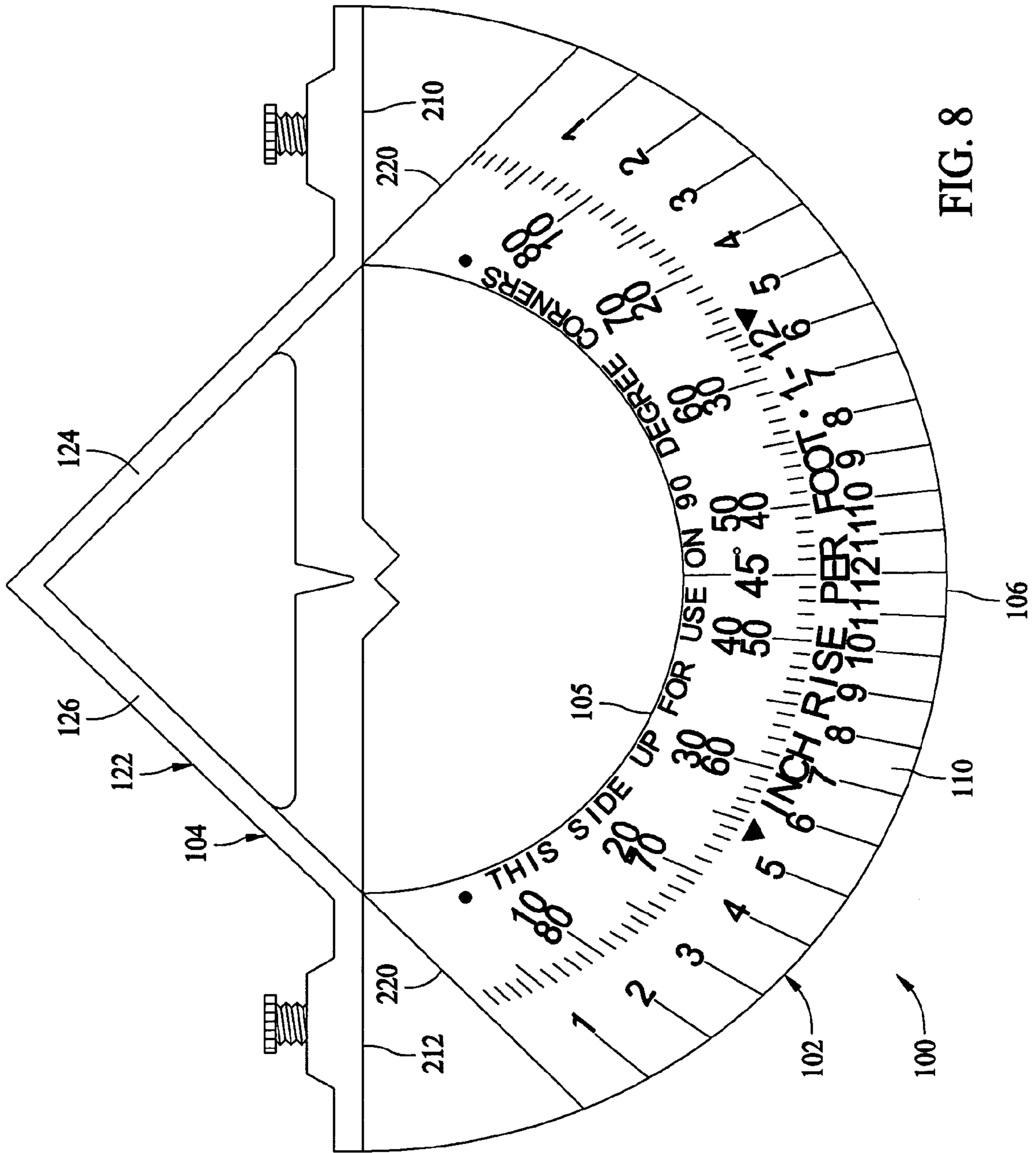


FIG. 8

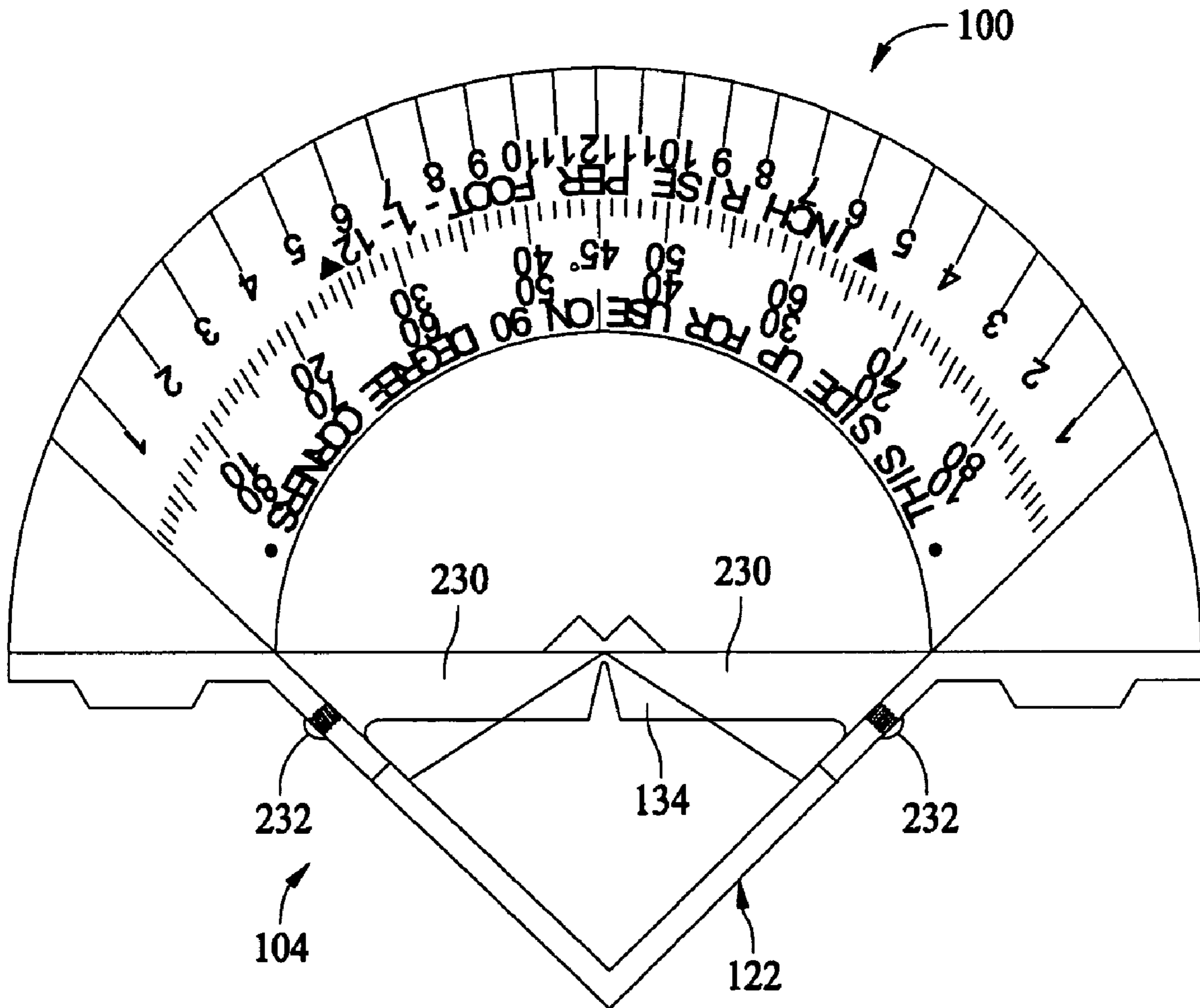


FIG. 9



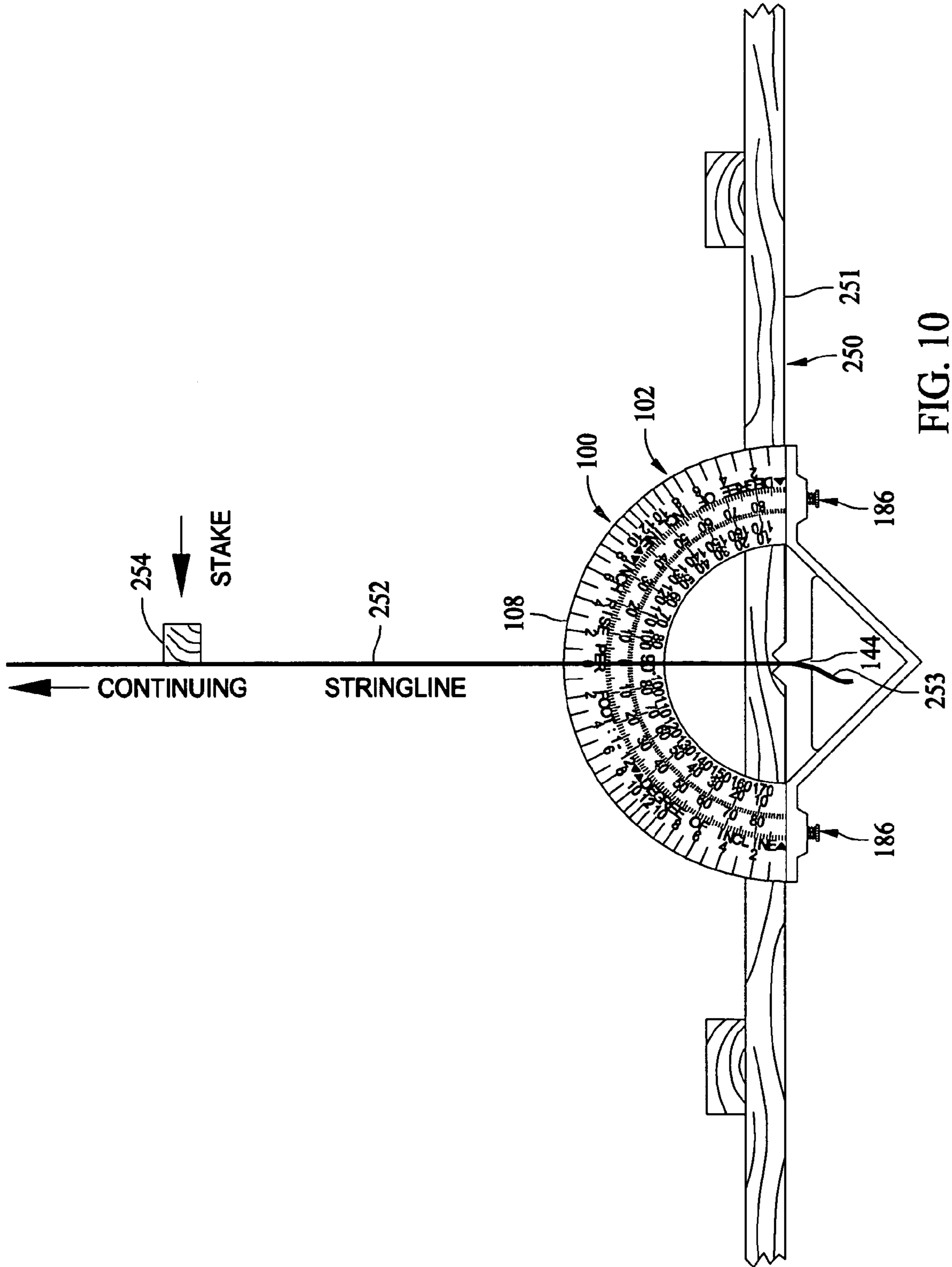


FIG. 10

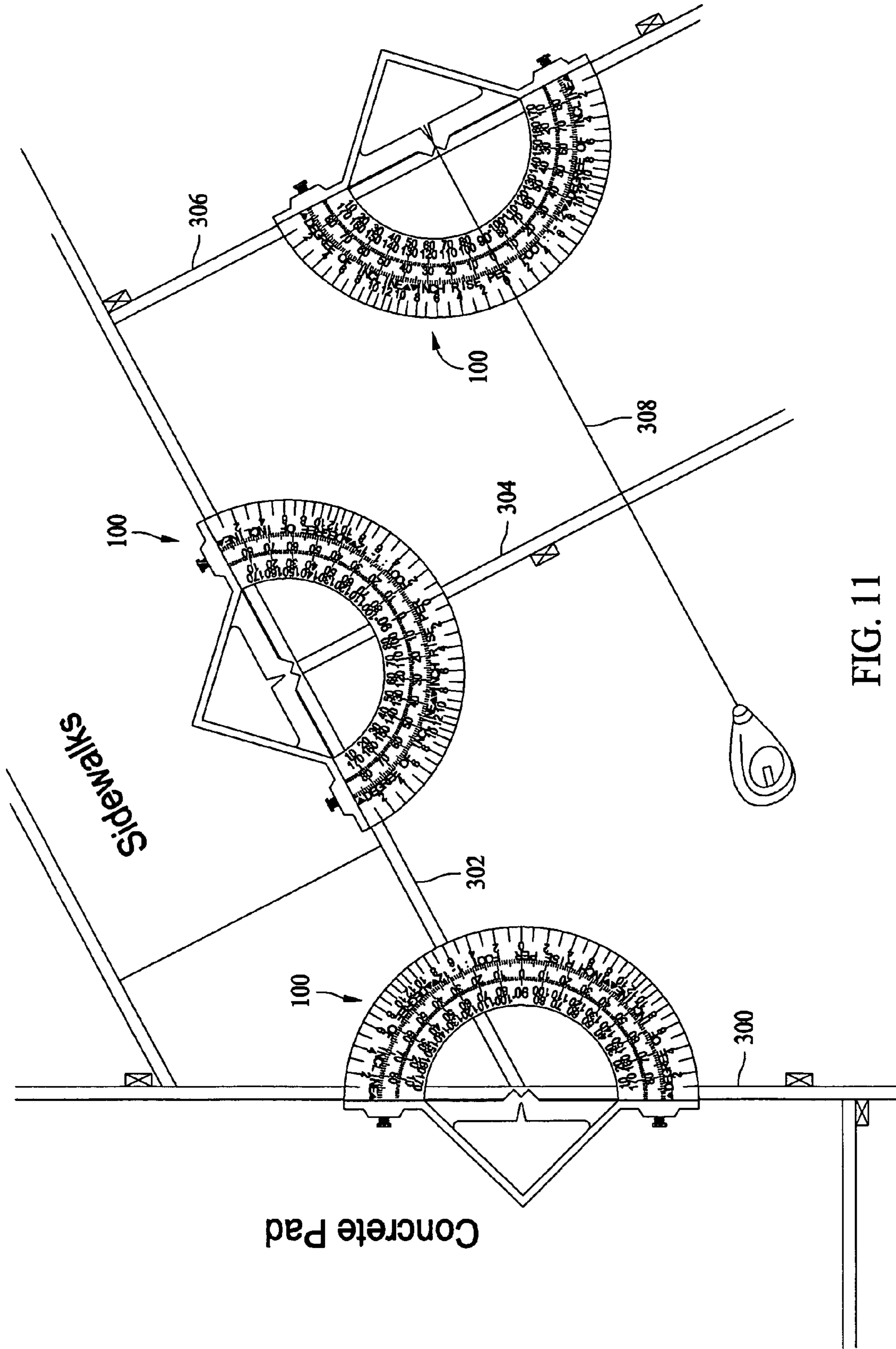


FIG. 11

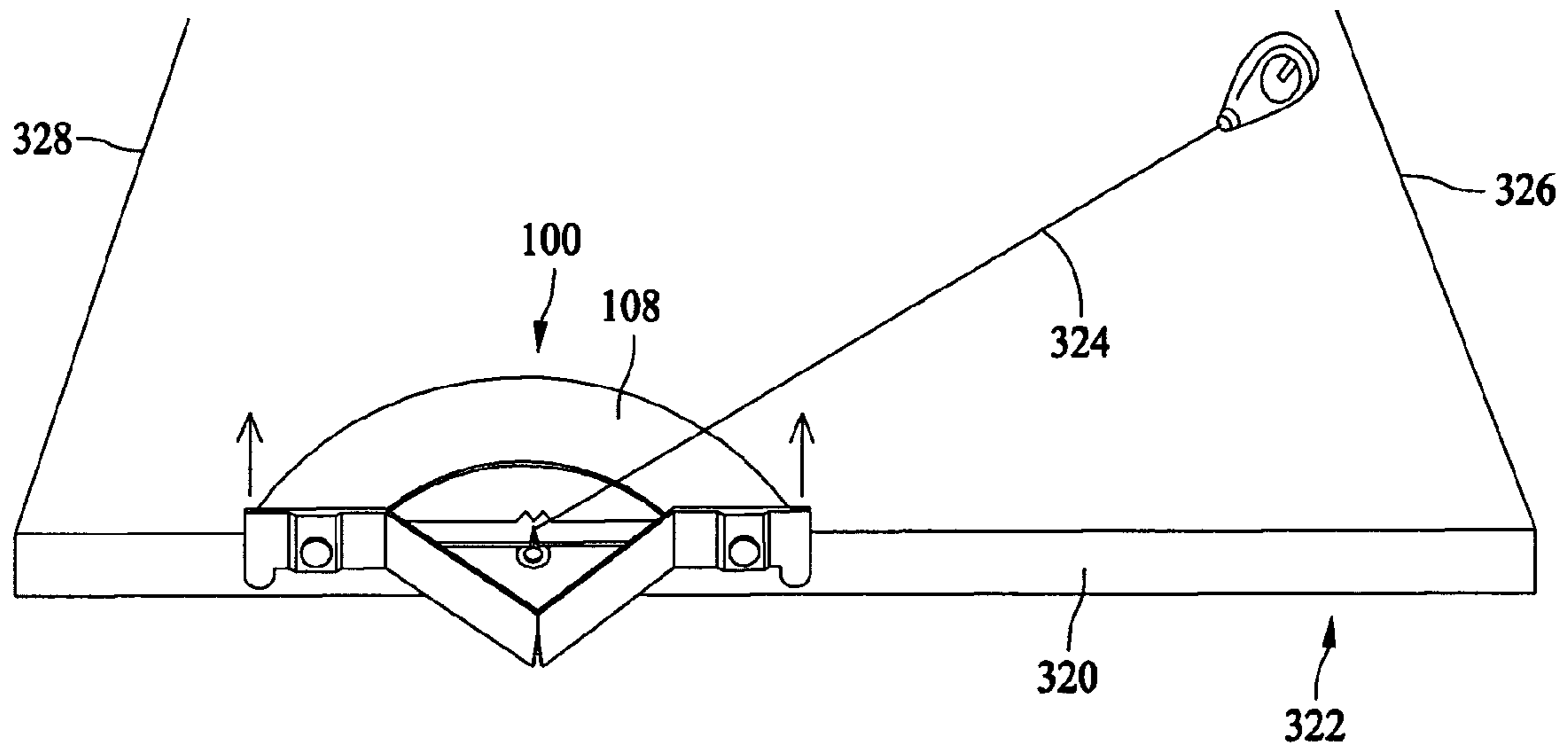


FIG. 12

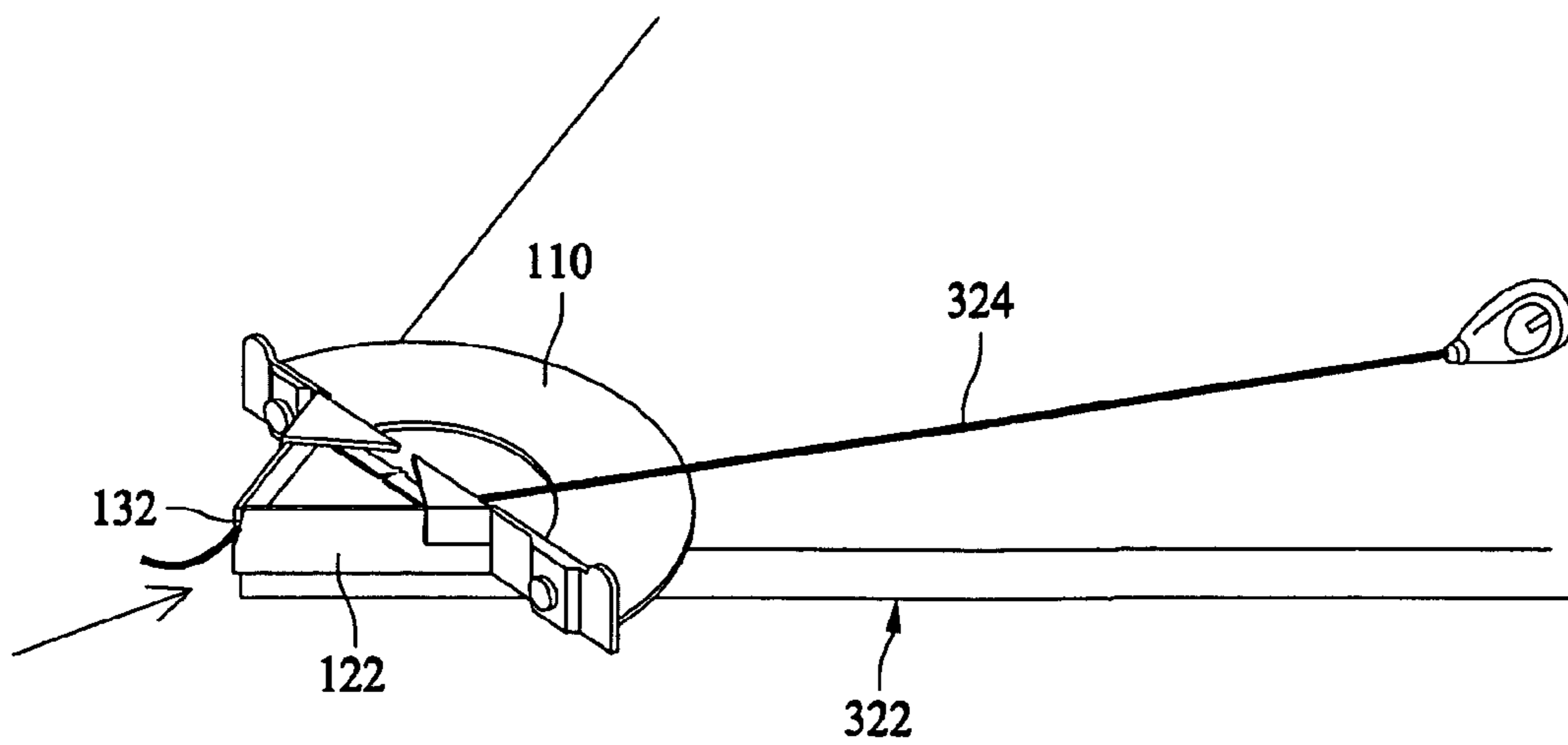
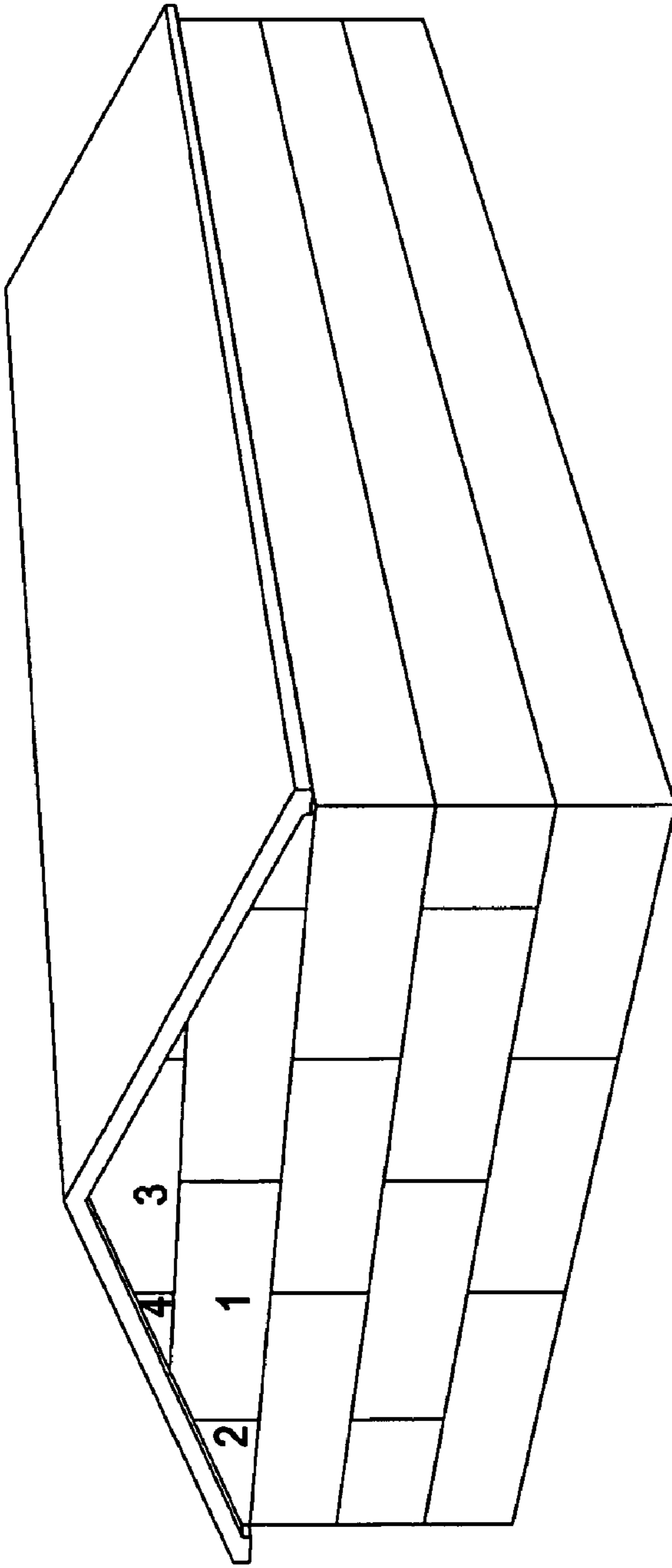


FIG. 13



**\* THIS ILLUSTRATION SHOWS THE PURPOSE OF CUTS BEING ESTABLISHED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE. THE NUMBERS ON THE BUILDING CORRESPOND WITH THE NUMBERED CUTS ON FIG. 15 TO SHOW THE BASIC ROOF PITCH CUT CAPABILITIES USING A CHALKLINE.**

**FIG. 14**



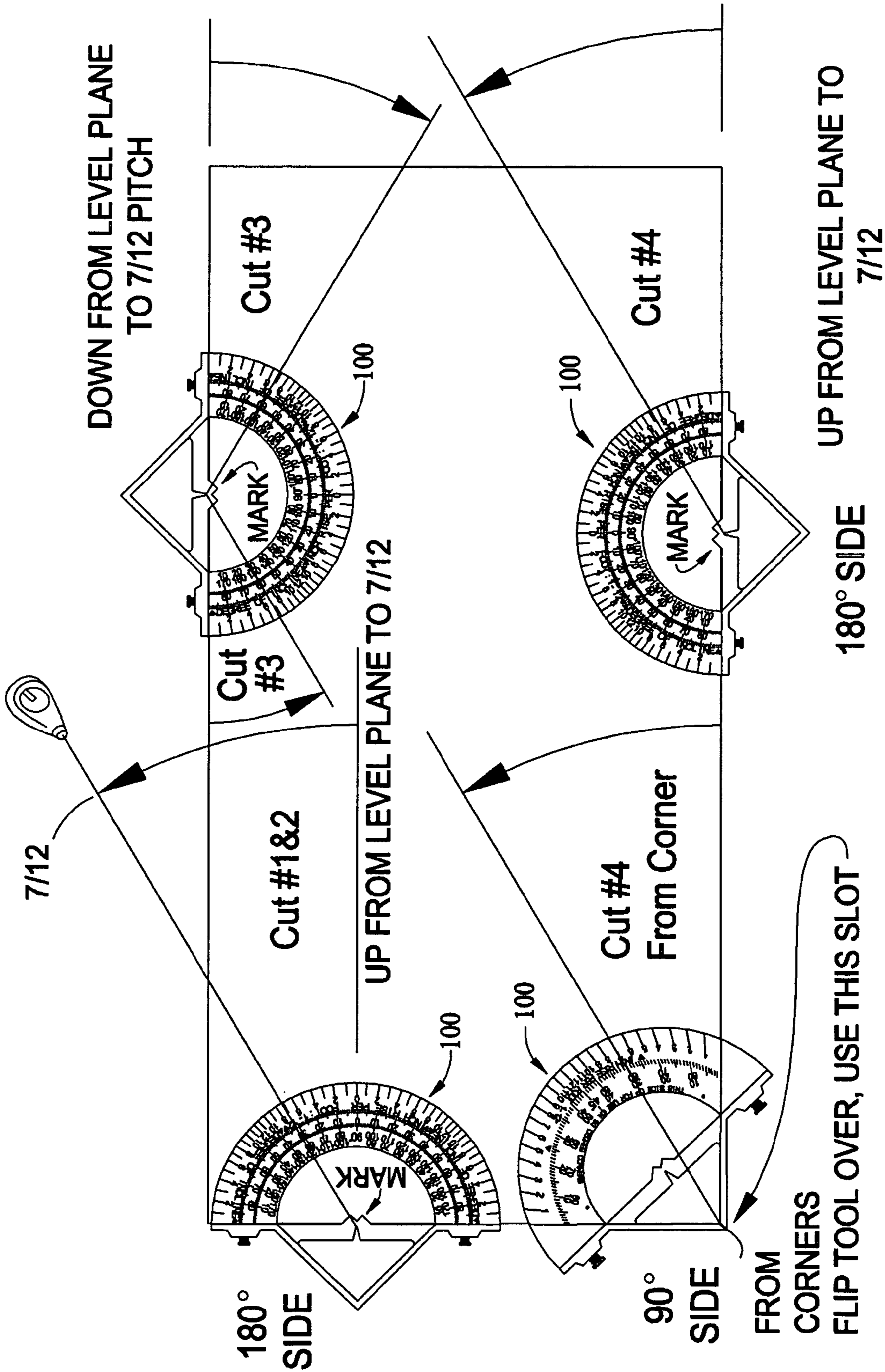


FIG. 15

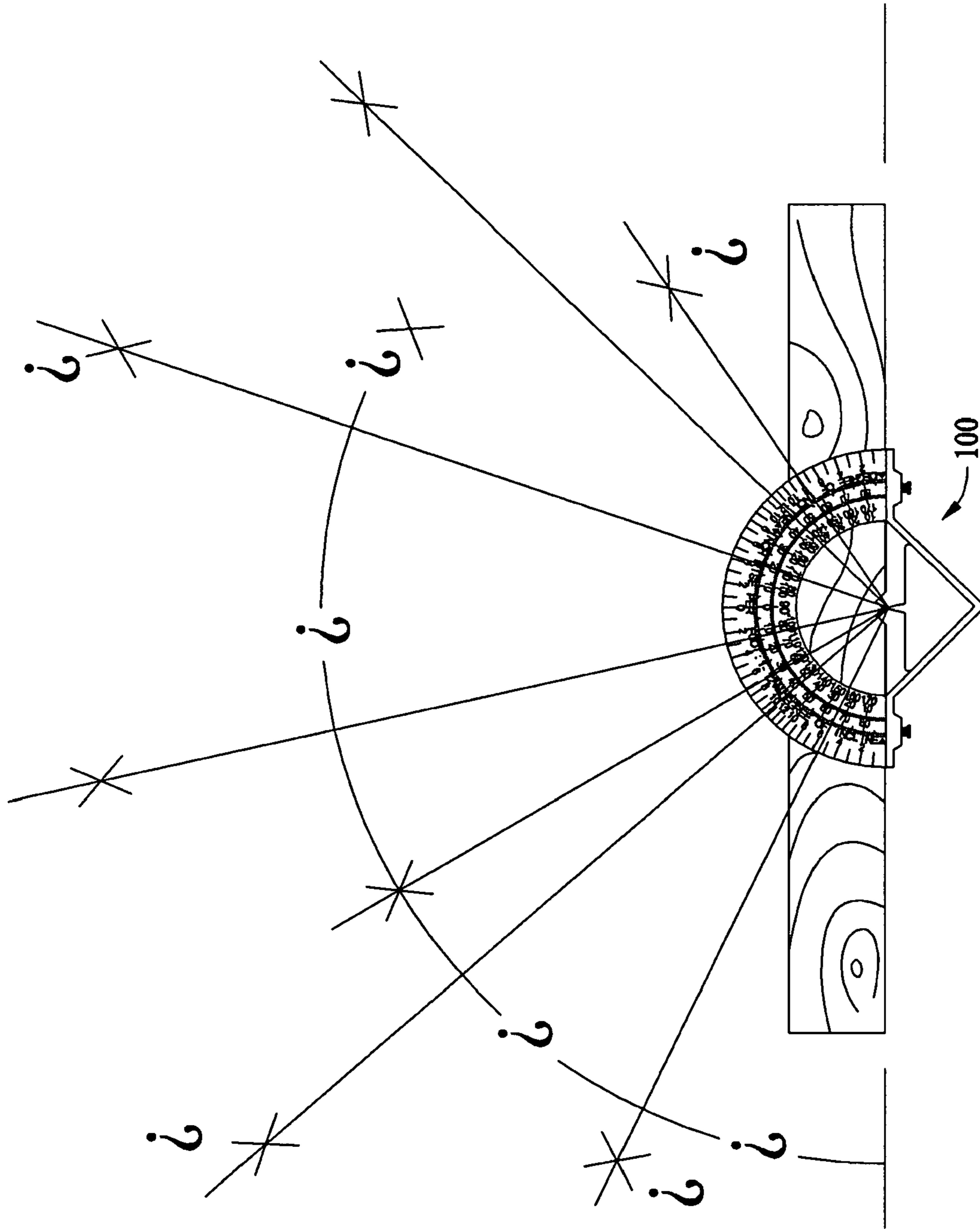


FIG. 16

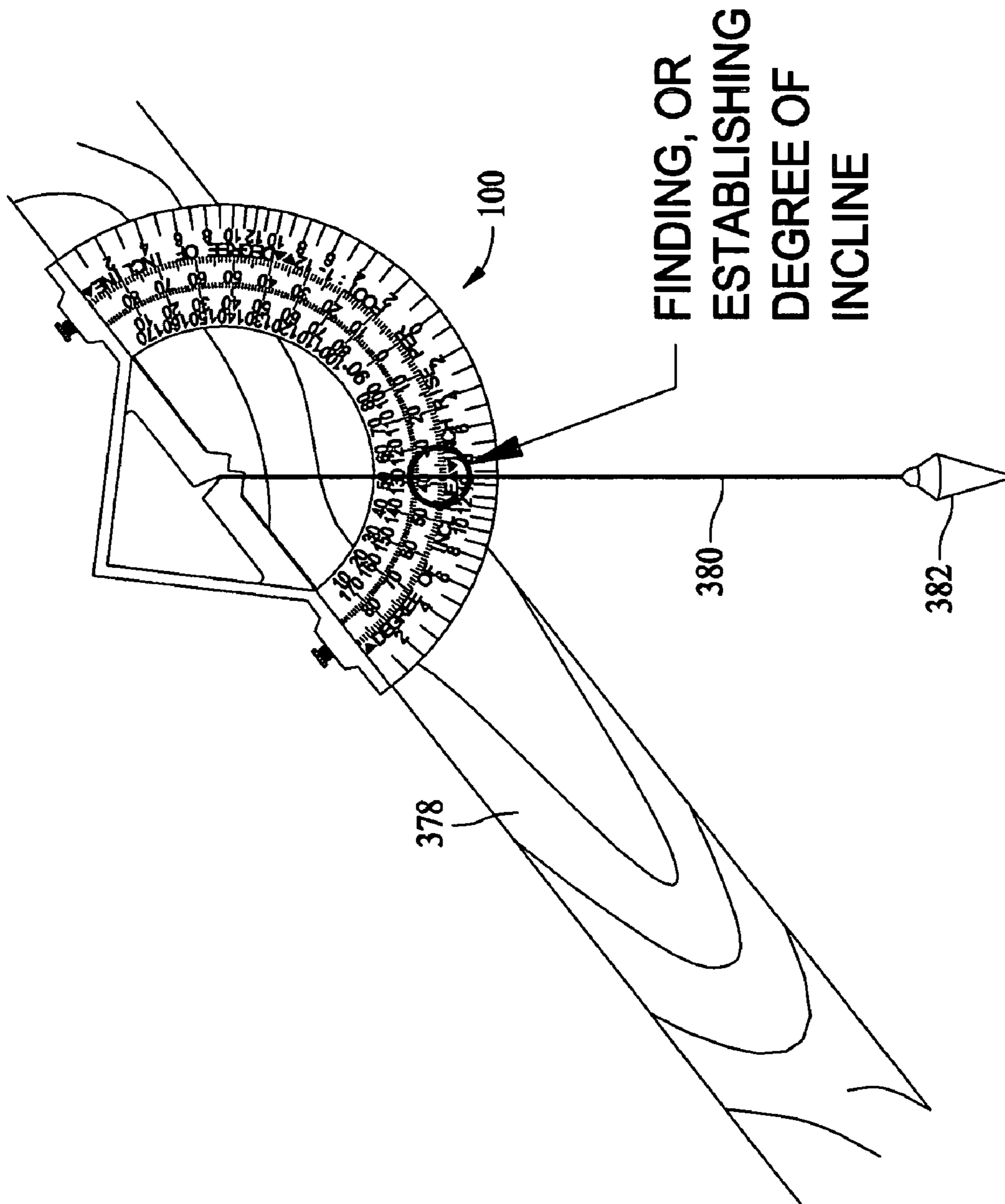


FIG. 17

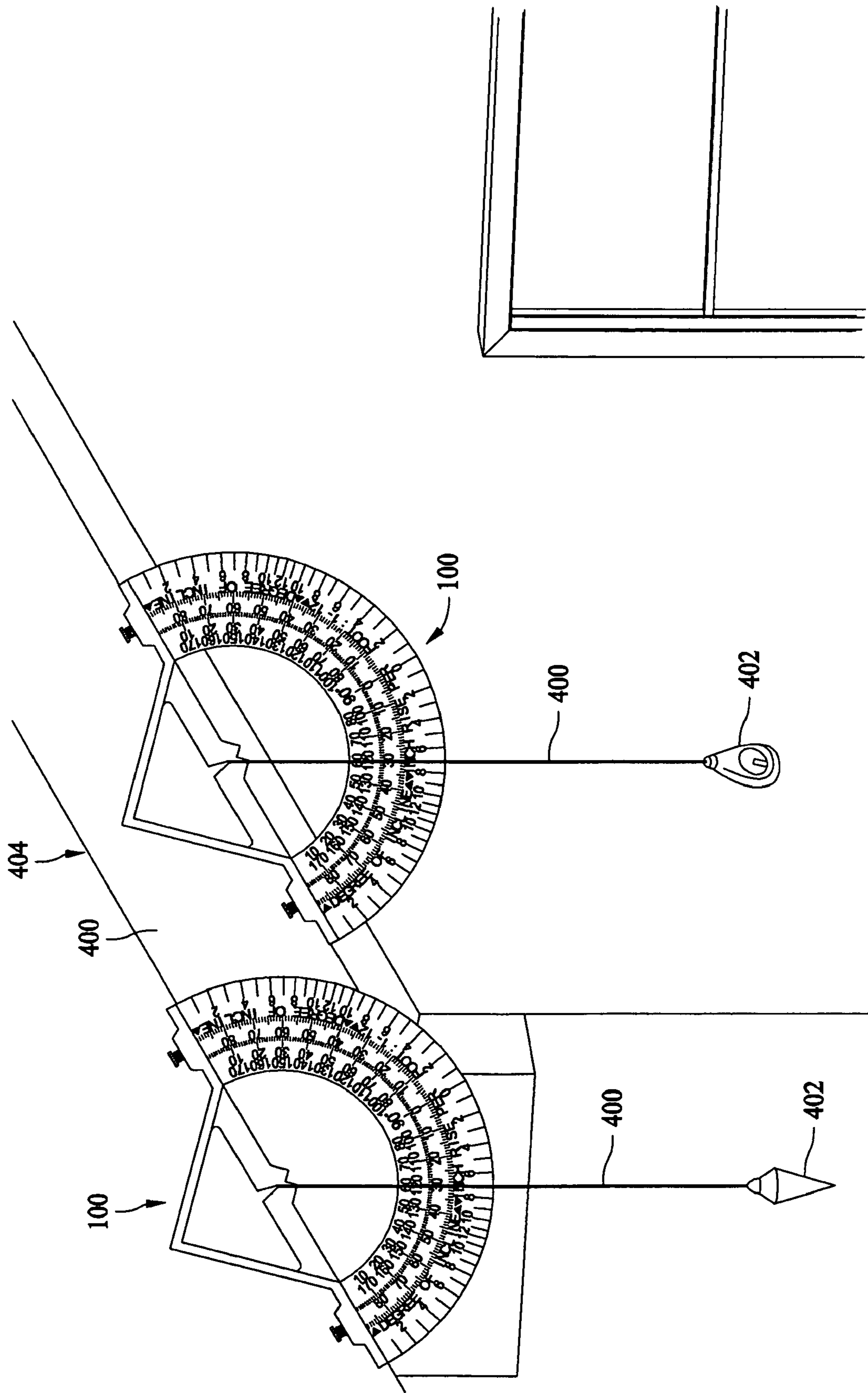


FIG. 18



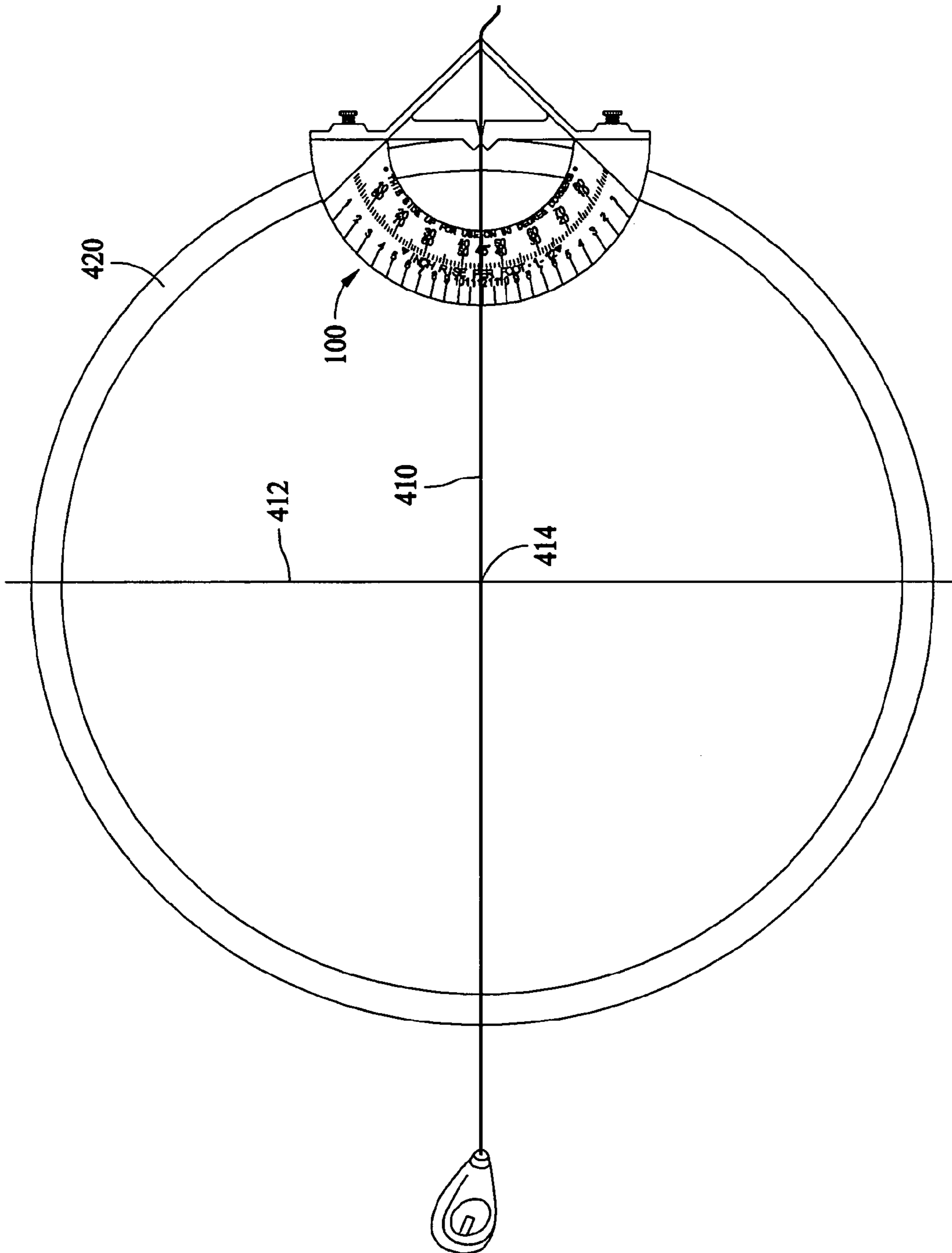


FIG. 19

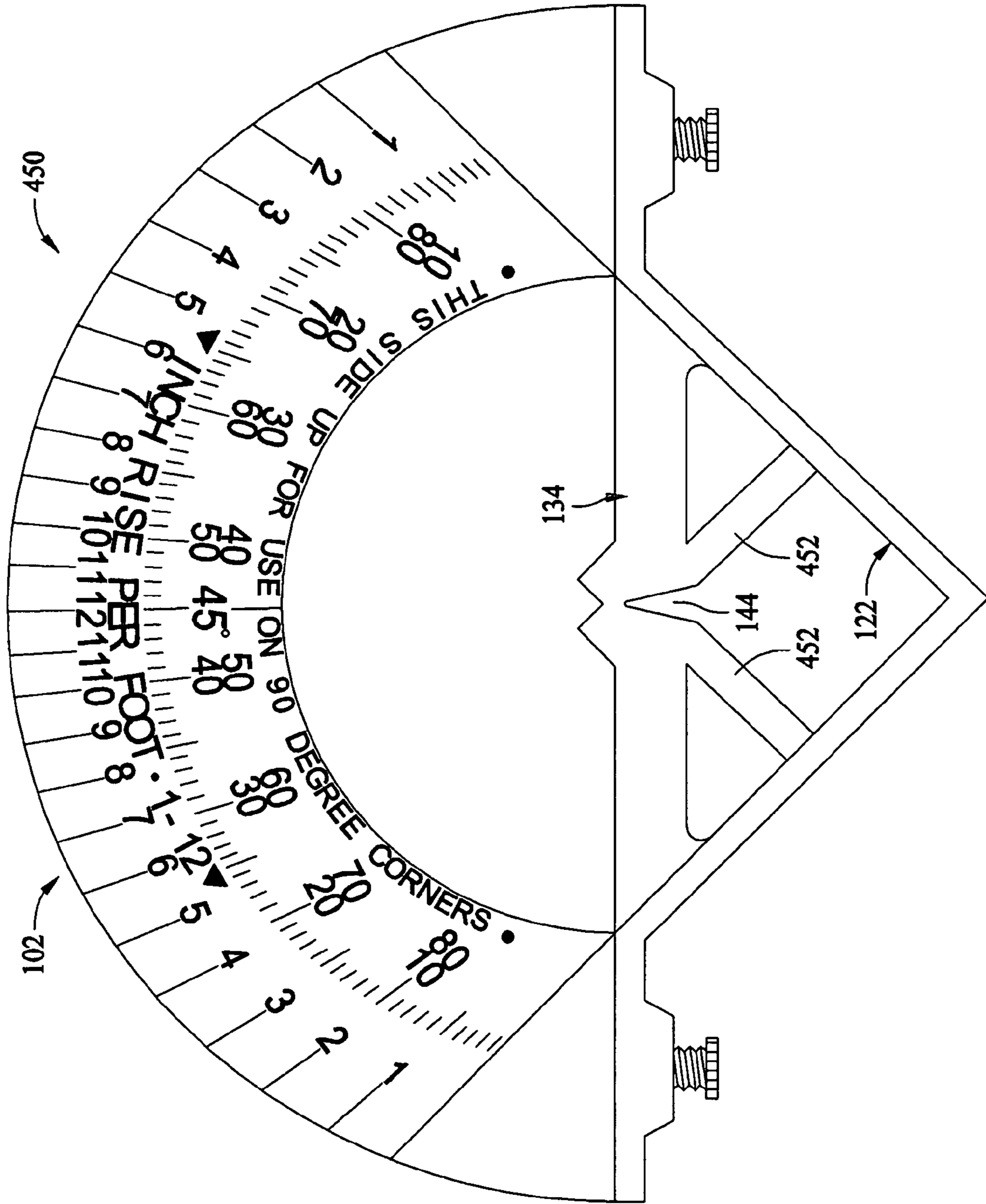


FIG. 20



1

## CONSTRUCTION LAYOUT AND ANGLE MEASUREMENT TOOL

### CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/573,967 filed May 24, 2004, the subject matter of which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to tools, and more specifically to layout and evaluation tools used for construction projects.

A variety of tools exist which are used to layout construction sites and evaluate existing structures or construction projects in progress. Carpenters, for example, are often charged with layouts and construction of various projects. For example, wall framing and finishing, roofline construction and finishing, banister and railing construction, patio and deck construction, and framing for sidewalks, pathways, and the like often require great attention to design details which carpenters, among others, must incorporate into the final construction. One problem which carpenters must face is accurate and efficient location of angles and distances in laying out construction sites, and in cutting construction materials to complete projects.

A variety of tools exist which carpenters presently use to measure angles for layout of construction sites and fabrication of structures. For example, roofing or framing squares and various protractor tools are available which allow carpenters and construction tools to measure angles for site layout and to mark construction pieces for cutting during fabrication of a structure. Such known angle measuring tools are, however, disadvantaged in several aspects.

For example, except for very small layouts and small construction components, it typically takes two workers to layout sites, measure larger pieces for fabrication, and evaluate existing constructions or constructions in progress. One worker is typically needed to hold the measuring tool at a predetermined location, while another worker is needed to extend a string line to a location some distance away from the tool. In a cooperative manner, the worker with the measuring tool directs the worker with the string line to adjust the position of the string until the desired angle is obtained, and then to set a marker on the site (e.g., a stake or a flag) or to mark a construction workpiece for cutting. For various reasons, however, it is not always easy to dedicate two workers to such tasks, and it would be desirable if such tasks could be efficiently performed by only one person, potentially saving time and expense for construction projects.

Additionally, existing tools are generally designed for use in one particular orientation by the user (e.g., measurement from a horizontal edge). If a user attempts to use the tool in another orientation (e.g., measurement from a vertical position), the user must adapt and use the tool differently, sometimes requiring mathematical computation or adjustment to the reading of the tool to measure or mark certain angles. It would be desirable to provide a tool which may be more or less universally used in the same manner in a variety of positions and orientations by the user, thereby simplifying use of the tools and prevent mistakes due to mathematical errors.

2

Still further, when evaluating existing structures for improvement, repair, or finishing work, known layout and measuring tools are not that helpful in determining angles. For example, on-site determination of the pitch of a roof, an unknown angle between two elements, or the centerline of a circle or arc is generally determined by measurement of distances and mathematical formulas, and not by direct measurement with tools. It would be desirable to provide a tool that is more capable of directly evaluating existing structures without mathematical computation.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

According to an exemplary embodiment, an angle measurement and layout tool is provided. The tool comprises a support portion configured to seat against an edge of a construction workpiece, and a guide portion extending from the support portion. The guide portion has opposite faces with each face having measurement indicia thereon, and the measurement indicia is differently arranged on each of the opposite faces.

Optionally, the support portion may comprise a corner bracket, and the support portion may be configured to be attached to an edge of the construction workpiece. The support portion may include a first slot and a second slot spaced from the first slot, the first and second slots positioned relative to a respective one of the opposite faces of the guide portion to accurately measure angles when a reference line is extended from each of the first and second slots to the corresponding face of the guide portion. At least one extension arm attachable to the corner bracket may be provided, with a portion of the extension arm extending parallel to the ledge.

According to another exemplary embodiment a construction layout tool is provided. The tool comprises a support portion configured to seat against an edge of a construction workpiece, and the support portion comprises a flat ledge and a corner bracket. A guide portion extends from the support portion, and the guide portion has layout measurement indicia thereon.

According to another exemplary embodiment, a construction layout and angle measurement tool is provided. The tool comprises a support portion comprising a flat ledge and a corner bracket extending from the ledge. Each of the ledge and corner bracket define a slot for a reference line, and the slots of each of the ledge and the corner bracket are different from one another. A guide portion extends from the support portion, and the guide portion has opposite faces each having layout measurement indicia thereon. The measurement indicia of one of the faces corresponds to the slot of the ledge, and the measurement indicia of the other of the faces corresponds to the slot of the corner bracket, wherein when a reference line is extended through one of the slots and across the corresponding face of the guide portion, the orientation of the line with respect to the guide portion may accurately establish a desired layout or determine an unknown layout.

In yet another embodiment, an angle measurement and layout tool is provided. The tool comprises a support portion configured to receive a corner of a workpiece, and a guide portion extending from the support portion and marked with measurement indicia corresponding to the corner of the workpiece. The measurement indicia include at least one of an angular degree indicia and slope indicia.



## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary layout and angle measurement tool.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a portion of the tool shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a top plan view of a first face of the tool shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a top plan view of a second face of the tool shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 is a front elevational view of the tool shown in FIGS. 1-4.

FIG. 6 is a rear elevational view of the tool shown in FIGS. 1-4.

FIG. 7 is an enlarged view of a portion of the face shown in FIG. 3.

FIG. 8 is an enlarged view of a portion of the face shown in FIG. 4.

FIG. 9 is a partial top plan view of a further embodiment of a layout and angle measurement tool.

FIG. 10 illustrates a first exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIG. 11 illustrates a second exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIG. 12 illustrates a third exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIG. 13 illustrates a fourth exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIGS. 14 and 15 illustrates a sixth exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIG. 16 illustrates a seventh exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIG. 17 illustrates a seventh exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIG. 18 illustrates an eighth exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIG. 19 illustrates a ninth exemplary application of a tool according to the present invention.

FIG. 20 illustrates another embodiment of a tool according to an exemplary embodiment of the invention.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary layout and angle measurement tool **100** which may be used by carpenters, builders and construction workers, among others, to efficiently lay out construction sites, to evaluate existing structures and construction in progress, as well as permit efficient fabrication of construction projects by facilitating marking and cutting lines for construction workpieces, including but not limited to common building materials such as plywood, lumber, drywall, plastic and metallic materials widely used in construction projects of all kinds. As explained below, the tool **100** is a multi-task angle measuring device which may be used by only one person to find and establish desired angles when used with a common string, chalk line, or plumbob (not shown in FIG. 1).

For the reasons explained below, and unlike known tools, the tool **100** may be capably used by one person to, among other things, quickly approximate construction site layouts without the need or assistance of another person; snap lines with a chalk line at angles and pitches on common building materials along straight edges or from a 90° corner of the materials without the aggravation of the chalk-line clip sliding or falling off the mark; find unknown angles from one point to another over short or long areas depending on

length of string used with the tool; establish known angles; find an unknown actual degree of incline when using a plumbob with the tool; find an unknown roof pitch quickly and easily; find a centerline of a circle or a construction arc; provide an anchor, even along a vertical edge), for a chalk line clip or a plumbob; function as a level along a horizontal plane when used with a plumbob; and allow hands free use of the tool. The versatile tool **100** simplifies construction layout, fabrication and evaluation tasks by directly finding and establishing desired angles and key points for construction purposes without requiring time consuming mathematical computation and creative use and adaptation of existing tools to determine angles, slopes and key construction parameters, thereby avoiding potential mistakes associated with mathematical computation and known tools. The tool may be rather universally used in a variety of positions (e.g., vertical, horizontal, and inclined positions) to accomplish a wide variety of tasks.

As illustrated in FIG. 1, the tool **100** includes a generally flat and planar guide portion **102** extending from a support portion **104**. The guide portion **102** is generally annular in an exemplary embodiment and includes an inner edge **105** and an outer edge **106** which is spaced from the inner edge **105**. The inner and outer edges **105**, **106** of the guide portion **102** each extend as a substantially 180° arc having a constant radius **R1** and **R2**, respectively forming semicircular edges of the guide portion **102**. The inner edge **105** defines a semicircular opening **107** extending between the guide portion **102** and the support portion **104** of the tool **100**. While the guide portion **102** is illustrated as having a rounded or arcuate shape, it is understood that the guide portion may be otherwise shaped in an alternative embodiment. Other geometric shapes and configurations may be employed in other embodiments while still achieving the benefits of the invention and without departing from the scope of the invention. The particular embodiments described herein are therefore provided for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to limit the tool **100** to any particular shape.

As explained in detail below, the guide portion **102** includes opposite faces **108** and **110** extending between the inner and outer edges **105** and **106**. The faces **108** and **110** include markings or indicia (not shown in FIG. 1) which indicate angles, slopes, and other items of interest relative to a designated point of the support portion **104** explained below. Thus, when a reference line (not shown in FIG. 1), such as string or chalk line is coupled to the support portion **104** in the manner explained below, one of the faces **108** and **110** will indicate the angle of the reference line with respect to the tool **100** for quickly finding and establishing layouts for site layout or fabrication of construction projects.

As will become evident below, the tool **100** has two opposite working sides or faces. Each side is unique in application and script layout for measuring or determining angles, and each has its own individual pivot point or string slot to be used for that intended side or face. One side of the tool is for use on straight edges or baselines and the other side of the tool is for use on 90° corners.

Referring now to FIG. 2, the support portion **104** includes substantially flat and parallel ledges **120** at either end thereof which extend substantially perpendicular to the plane of the guide portion **102** (shown in FIG. 1) in an exemplary embodiment. A corner bracket **122** extends between the ledges **120** of the support portion **104**, and the corner bracket includes corner legs **124** and **126** which extend substantially perpendicular to one another and extend substantially at a 45° angle from the plane of the ledges **120** in an illustrative embodiment. That is, the corner bracket **122** extends down-



ward from the ledges **120** in a V-shaped configuration. The legs **124** and **126** of the corner bracket **122** are flat and smooth and define an opening or pocket **128** therebetween which may receive a corner of a sheet of building material as further explained below. An intersection **130** of the corner legs **124** and **126** includes a slot **132** which may receive an end of the reference line (e.g., string or chalk line) used with the tool **100**.

A cross member **134** extends between the ledges **120** above the corner bracket **122**, and in an exemplary embodiment, the cross member **134** is a beam having opposite faces **136** and **138** which extend parallel to the respective faces **108** and **110** of the guide portion **102** (shown in FIG. 1). Sight members **139** project upwardly from a top surface **140** of the cross member **134** and are triangular in shape in one embodiment. The sight members **139** include inwardly sloping sides which define a reference point **142** therebetween. The reference point **142** is centered relative to the guide portion **102** such that indicia on the faces **108** and **110** of the guide surfaces are referenced to the point **142** for accurately establishing and determining angles with the tool **100**.

A slot **144** is formed in a lower edge **146** of the cross member **134**, and the slot is substantially aligned with the reference point **142** such that when a reference line is received in the slot **144**, the reference line substantially coincides with the reference point **142** for measuring an angle of the reference line with respect to the tool **100** using the guide portion **102**. Additionally, the slot **132** in the corner bracket **122** is aligned with the reference point **142** on a radial centerline of the guide portion **102** and is located approximately a radial distance **R1** (shown in FIG. 1) from the reference point **142**. Thus, when the reference line is received in the slot **132**, angles may be accurately measured, established, or determined using the guide portion **102**. As will be explained below, one of the faces **108** and **110** is marked with indicia which is arranged to indicate to indicate an angle from the reference line in the slot **144**, and other of the faces **108** and **110** is marked with indicia arranged to indicate to indicate an angle from the reference line in the slot **132**.

The top surface **140** of the cross member **134** is substantially flush with a top surface **148** of the support ledges **120**. That is, the top surface **140** of the cross member **134** is in the plane of the support ledges **120**. The ledges **120** may therefore be seated against an edge of a workpiece (not shown) such as lumber, drywall, or plywood, to align the tool **100** with respect the workpiece, and the reference point **142** will likewise be located along the edge of the workpiece, while the sight members **129** extend over the surface of the workpiece and assist in aligning the reference point **142** with a location mark or tick mark on the workpiece, which shall be demonstrated in the exemplary applications of the tool **100** which are described below.

In one embodiment, each of the guide portion **102** and the support portion **104** are fabricated from metal (e.g., low gage steel), although it is appreciated that other suitable materials, whether metallic or non-metallic (e.g., a high strength plastic) may be used to fabricated the tool **100**. The guide portion **102** and the support portion may be integrally formed in a unitary construction via, for example a known molding process using known materials. Alternatively, the support portion **104** may be separately fabricated from the guide portion **102**, and the guide portion **102** may be fastened to the support portion **104** using, for example, spot welding or another known technique.

FIG. 3 illustrates in plan view the tool **100** with guide portion **102** extending upward from the support portion **104**

and the face **108** of the guide portion **102** exposed for use. The face **108** includes markings and indicia which is described further below. When the tool **100** is positioned along a workpiece such that an edge of the workpiece abuts the support ledges **120** of the support portion **104** behind the guide portion **102**, and further when a reference line is received in the slot **144** in the cross member **134**, the angle of the reference line with respect to the tool **100** is indicated by the markings on the face **108** of the guide portion **102**.

As also illustrated in FIG. 3, the tool **100** includes embossments **180** which are formed in the underside of the support ledges **120** of the support portion **104**. The embossments **180** each include a threaded bore **182** extending through the respective ledge **120**, and the bores **182** receive adjustable fastener assemblies **184** which may be used to anchor the tool **100** to a workpiece. In the exemplary embodiment, the fastener assemblies include a thumbscrew or threaded pin **186** having a point **188** on one end and a head **190** opposite the point **188**. A spring element **192** extends around the pin **186** to provide a biasing counterforce to attachment of the pins **186** to the workpiece. The pins **186** are extended through the spring elements **192** and the pins **186** are coupled to the bores **182** with threaded engagement. When the pins **186** are rotated by turning the respective heads **196**, the pins **186** may be advanced through the bores **182** toward the workpiece or pulled away from the workpiece.

As the points **188** of the pins **186** are advanced, depending on the hardness of the workpiece and the force or torque which turns the pins, the points **188** may pierce the edge of the workpiece and fasten the tool **100** to the workpiece. The spring elements **192** provide an outwardly directed bias force in the direction of arrow **F** in FIG. 3 so that, in the event that the pins **186** are only loosely attached to the workpiece, the spring elements **192** will detach the pins **186** from the workpiece. In essence, the spring elements **192** force the user to tighten the pins to the workpiece to a predetermined degree or to a minimum level of force based on the characteristics (e.g., the spring constant) of the spring elements **192**, thereby fully and soundly seating the tool **100** and ensuring a sufficient anchoring force is present when the tool **100** is attached to a workpiece. Fastening of the tool to the workpiece may be of particular advantage when using the tool along a vertical or inclined edge of the workpiece.

While spring loaded pins are believed to be advantageously used as the fastener assemblies **184**, it is recognized that other fasteners and mechanism could likewise be employed to fasten the tool **100** to a workpiece. In particular, clamping mechanisms may be advisable to secure the tool **100** to a metal workpiece, while the pins may be adequate for non-metallic materials.

FIG. 4 illustrates in plan view the tool **100** with guide portion **102** extending upward from the support portion **104** and the face **110** of the guide portion **102** exposed for use. That is, FIG. 4 illustrates the opposite side of the tool **100** from FIG. 3. The face **110** includes markings and indicia which is described further below, and notably, the indicia on the face **110** is different in arrangement and in position from the indicia on the face **108** (shown in FIG. 3). When a corner of a workpiece (not shown in FIG. 4) is received in the corner bracket **122**, and further when a reference line (not shown in FIG. 4) is received in the slot **132** in the corner bracket **122**, the angle of the reference line with respect to the tool **100** is indicated by the markings on the face **110** of the guide portion **102**. Thus, the face **110** employs a different attachment location (i.e., the slot **132**) for the reference line than the face **108** (shown in FIG. 3) which employs the slot



7

144 in the cross member 134. The support portion should fully and soundly seat against the edge of a workpiece when laying out or determining angles to ensure an accurate reading of the tool 100.

FIGS. 5 and 6 are front and rear elevational views, respectively, of the tool 100. It is seen from FIG. 5 that the sight members 139 are aligned with the slot 132 of the corner bracket 122 and the bores 182 in the support ledges 120 containing the threaded pins 186 (shown in FIG. 3). Seating tabs 200 project outward from either end of the support portion 104, and the tabs 200 provide proper seating of the tool 100 when used along a vertical edge of a workpiece (not shown in FIG. 5). Additionally, the tabs 200 may align and position the tool 100 when held to the bottom of an incline such as a soffit, or to acquire a degree of incline such as a roof pitch, in the manner explained below. In FIG. 6, the heads 190 of the pins 186 (shown in FIG. 3) are seen protruding from the embossments 180 of the support ledges 120.

In a further embodiment, additional holes (not shown in FIGS. 5 and 6) may be formed in the support portion 104, and a user may "hard mount" the tool to a straight edge with screws or another known fastener for a stronger and sturdier connection of the tool to a workpiece.

FIG. 7 illustrates the face 108 of the guide portion 102 in more detail, and particularly wherein exemplary indicia and marking of the face 108 is shown. In the exemplary embodiment, the face 108 includes angular degree indicia extending along the inner 105 of the guide portion 102, and slope indicia (expressed in, for example, inch rise per foot or degree of incline) along the outer edge 106. Further, for the user's convenience, and in acknowledgment of the tool being used in several different orientations or positions, several different varieties of each of the angular indicia and the slope indicia are provided. For example, and as illustrated in FIG. 7, an innermost scale of angular indicia is provided which indicates in incrementing marks or bar lines, an angle of 0° to 180° extending from a left hand edge 210 in FIG. 7 to a right hand edge 212 of the guide portion 102. An intermediate scale of angular indicia is provided adjacent the innermost scale and the intermediate scale indicates an angle of 0° to 180° extending from the right hand edge 212 to the left hand edge 210. A third or outermost scale of angular indicia, which also serves to indicate degree of incline, is provided which indicates an angle of 0° to 90° measured from a centerline 214 of the guide portion 102 to either of the left or right hand edges 210 and 212. Thus, angles may conveniently be measured, determined or established from left, right, and center positions when the tool is located on a workpiece.

The slope indicia begins at each of the left and right edges 210 and 212 and increments upward to 12 inches per foot (i.e., a 45° angle), and decreases back to a zero position coincident with the centerline 214 of the guide portion 102. Thus, three zero slope positions located 90° from one another are provided on the face 108 of the guide portion 102, and the tool may therefore be used in vertical and horizontal positions while providing a horizontal zero point from which to measure. Starting from the desired horizontal zero position, a reference line may be aligned with the nearest desired slope or pitch indicia from the applicable boundary line 220 to measure or evaluate angles from vertical or horizontal positions without mathematical manipulation of the reading of the tool which would otherwise be necessary if a user attempts to measure from a non-zero point on the slope indicia scale. Thus, because of the multiple zero slope positions and the increasing and

8

decreasing scale of the slope indicia, the tool may be easily used on all sides (e.g., the left, right, top and bottom edges of a workpiece such as a sheet of drywall or plywood) while allowing direct reading of slopes and angles without mathematical manipulation of the reading of the tool. The inch rise per foot/degree of incline conversion provided by the face 108 is user friendly for quick angle settings on circular and miter saws.

While exemplary indicia for the face 108 of the guide portion 102 has been described, it is understood that other indicia may be desirable in alternative embodiments. By way of example, different gradations or increments of marking may be included to provide more or less detail in measuring capability of the tool. Likewise, metric units for slope may be indicated, and while it is believed that slopes of greater than 12 inches per foot are unlikely to be encountered for most projects, greater ranges of slopes may be indicated. Further, additional indicia may be added which does not pertain to angular degrees or slopes or pitches of inclines but is nonetheless useful information to users.

FIG. 8 illustrates the face 110 of the guide portion 102 in more detail, and particularly wherein exemplary indicia and marking of the face 110 is shown. In the exemplary embodiment, the face 110 includes angular degree indicia spanning only a portion of the guide portion 102 of the tool between the end edges 210 and 210 of the guide portion 102. Rather, boundary lines 220 of the indicia extend between the inner edge 105 and the outer edge 106 in a tangential relation to the corner legs 124 and 126 of the corner bracket 122. Thus, when the corner legs 124 and 126 are fitted to a corner of a workpiece, the boundary lines 220 match the side edges of the corner.

As illustrated in FIG. 8, angular degree indicia extends along the inner edge 105 of the guide portion 102, and slope indicia (expressed in, for example) inch rise per foot extends along the outer edge 106. Further, for the user's convenience, and in acknowledgment of the tool being used in several different orientations or positions, several different varieties of each of the angular indicia and the slope indicia are provided. For example, and as illustrated in FIG. 8, an innermost scale of angular indicia is provided which indicates in incrementing marks or bar lines, an angle of 0° to 90° extending from the left hand boundary line 220 in FIG. 7 to the right hand boundary line 220 of the guide portion 102. An outer scale of angular indicia is provided adjacent the innermost scale and the intermediate scale indicates an angle of 0° to 90° extending from the right hand boundary line 220 to the left hand boundary line 220. Thus, angles may conveniently be measured, determined or established from left or right positions when the tool is located on a workpiece.

The slope indicia begins at each of the boundary lines 220, increments upward to a maximum point corresponding to 12 inches rise per foot (i.e., a 45° angle) coincident with the centerline 214 (FIG. 7) of the guide portion 102, and decreases back to a zero position for a total span of 90° on the guide portion 102. Thus, slopes or pitches of inclines may conveniently be measured, determined or established from left or right positions when the tool is located on a workpiece. As such, measuring, determining or simplifying the pitches of inclines is simplified by allowing the tool to be used on all sides of a construction workpiece, such as a sheet of drywall or plywood, while directly finding desired slopes. In particular, because of the 90° span and configuration of the slope indicia, one of the zero slope positions (i.e., the location of the boundary lines 220) is always positioned horizontally and the other of the zero slope positions is



always positioned vertically regardless of where the tool is positioned on the workpiece (i.e., whether the tool is used on the upper left, upper right, lower left or lower right corner of the workpiece). Because of the horizontal and vertical zero slope positions, and the increasing and decreasing scale of slope indicia allowing measurement from either of the zero slope positions at the boundary lines **220**, slopes may be directly determined directly from either of the zero slope positions. Starting from the desired horizontal or vertical zero position, a reference line may be aligned with the nearest desired slope or pitch indicia from the applicable boundary line **220** to measure or evaluate angles from vertical or horizontal positions without mathematical manipulation of the reading of the tool which would otherwise be necessary if only one zero slope position was provided and a user attempted to measure from a non-zero point on the slope indicia scale. Associated confusion and error due to measurement from a non-zero point is avoided with the tool **100** which provides vertical and horizontal zero points in use.

While exemplary indicia for the face **110** of the guide portion **102** has been described, it is understood that other indicia may be desirable in alternative embodiments. By way of example, different gradations or increments of marking may be included to provide more or less detail in measuring capability of the tool. Likewise, metric units for slope may be indicated, and while it is believed that slopes of greater than 12 inches rise per foot are unlikely to be encountered for most projects, greater ranges of slopes may be indicated. Further, additional indicia may be added which does not pertain to angular degrees or slopes or pitches of inclines but is nonetheless useful information to users.

The indicia shown in FIGS. **7** and **8** may be applied to the respective faces **108** and **110** in a known manner, including but not limited to printing techniques. Alternatively, the indicia may be formed integrally with the guide portion **102** in, for example, a known stamping, machining, molding, forging or engraving process. The indicia may include varying colors and style for point of emphasis and to include a variety of visual impressions to the user.

FIG. **9** illustrates the tool **100** including work area extension arms **230** which are coupled to the corner bracket **122** of the support portion **104**. The work area extension arms **230** extend the mobility of the tool when the face **108** (shown in FIGS. **3** and **7**) is used and the angle begins within for example, a distance from the corner of the workpiece which is less than the length of the cross member **134** (e.g., 2.5 inches in one embodiment). Without the arms **230** the tool will otherwise slip into the corner of the 90 degree area. If desired, the arms **230** may be removed by removing the attachment screws **232** which couple the arms **230** to the corner bracket **122**.

Having now described the structure of the tool, the versatility of the tool **100** will now be demonstrated in various exemplary applications in which methods to establish, determine and evaluate angles, slopes, and pitches are believed to be apparent. More specifically, the tool **100** is designed to work in conjunction with a reference line (e.g. chalkline, string, wire, and the like), and has a vast array of possible applications which may be performed without the need of another person to assist with the other end of the line.

FIG. **10** illustrates an exemplary layout application wherein desired angles may be established on a job site. The tool **100** is mounted to a workpiece **250** via the pins **186** as described above to securely anchor the tool to the workpiece. As shown in FIG. **10**, the workpiece is a piece of

lumber which has been set in a desired location on, for example, the ground, and the tool **100** is seated along a straight edge **251** of the workpiece. Accordingly, the tool **100** is oriented with the face **108** exposed to the user.

A reference line **252** in the form of a string line is received in the slot **144** of the support portion, and a clip **253** attached to the string line maintains the line **252** coupled to the slot **144**. In FIG. **10**, a 90° angle is desired to be set from the workpiece **250**, whereby the string line **252** is pulled taut and aligned against the 90° indicia on the face **108**. When the line **252** is properly aligned with respect to the guide portion **102** at a 90° angle, a stake **254** may be driven into the ground to mark the 90° position. Once the stake **254** is set, 90° positions may be established over longer distances in a similar manner by pulling the line **252** taut against the stake **254** to set a new marker at a distance from the stake **254**. Because the tool **100** is anchored to the workpiece, the user may work hands free of the tool, and thus one person may layout the appropriate angle once the tool **100** is mounted to the workpiece.

FIG. **11** illustrates, for example, a concrete pad and sidewalk construction layout using the tool **100**. First, the concrete frame **300** is set for pouring of the concrete pad. Next, the tool **100** is mounted to the frame **300** and a desired angle is set to place a frame **302** for the sidewalk in the manner described above in relation to FIG. **11**. Once the frame **302** is set, the tool **100** may be mounted to the frame **302**, and another angle may be set to mount further frame elements **304** and **306** for another portion of the sidewalk. Once the concrete is poured, the tool **100** may be mounted to the frame element **306** and used with a chalk line to use as a reference line with the tool to layout, for example, concrete cut lines to complete the sidewalk. Once again, because the tool **100** is anchored to the workpiece frames **300-306**, the layout may be accomplished by only one person while still achieving great accuracy in the layout.

FIG. **12** illustrates the tool **100** mounted to a straight edge **320** of a sheet **322** of building material, such as, for example a sheet of drywall or plywood. The tool **100** is attached to the edge **320** as described above, and a chalk line **324** is used with the tool **100** to snap a cutting line for the sheet of material. The cut line may be quickly established by a single person in a direct manner without mathematical computation. The tool **100** could likewise be used on other edges **326, 328** of the sheet of material, and using the face **108** of the tool **100**, angles could be pulled from left, right and center positions.

FIG. **13** illustrates the tool **100** mounted to a corner of a sheet **322** of building material, such as, for example a sheet of drywall or plywood. By coupling a chalk line **324** to the slot **132** of the corner bracket **122** and using the face **110**, the chalk line may be aligned with the appropriate indicia on the face **110** to snap a cut line from the corner of the sheet. The cut line may be quickly established by a single person in a direct manner without mathematical computation. The tool **100** could likewise be used on other edges **326, 328** of the sheet of material, and using the face **108** of the tool **100**, angles could be pulled from left, right and center positions.

FIGS. **14** and **15** illustrate the tool being used to establish cuts to sheets of building material to match a roof pitch. In FIG. **15**, the tool **100** is illustrated in various positions on a sheet of material to illustrate the cuts of the numbered panels illustrated in FIG. **14**.

FIG. **16** illustrates the tool **100** mounted in a desired location, and once mounted, the tool **100** may be used with a string line to determine the angular position of any object or location relative the tool **100**. Thus, unknown angles may



## 11

be determined directly without mathematical computation, and the unknown angles may be determined by only one person without the assistance of others.

FIG. 17 illustrates the tool 100 mounted to an inclined workpiece, such as a rafter, and when used with a string line and a plum bob 382. The angle, slope or pitch of the workpiece 378 may be directly determined by only one person, without the assistance of others and without mathematical computation. Similarly, when used with a plum bob 382, the tool 100 may be used as a level to layout or assess a horizontal position of a workpiece.

FIG. 18 illustrates the tool 100 mounted to an inclined workpiece, such as a soffit 400, and when used with a string line 402 and a plumbob 402. The angle, slope or pitch of a roof 404 may be directly determined by only one person, without the assistance of others and without mathematical computation. As illustrated in FIG. 18, the tool 100 may be mounted to the soffit 400 from above or below as desired or as needed for the roof structure.

FIG. 19 illustrates the tool 100 being used to locate centerlines 410 and 412 of a construction arc or circle 420. Radial 410 and 412 centerlines may be quickly established, and the center 414 of the circle 420 may be located by intersecting the radial centerlines 410 and 412. Centers and centerlines may therefore be efficiently and accurately directly determined by only one person, without the assistance of others and without mathematical computation.

FIG. 20 illustrates another embodiment of a tool 450 including reinforcing truss bars 452 supporting the cross member 134 above the corner bracket 122. With the addition of the truss bars 452, the cross member 134 is less likely to be bent or misaligned with respect to the corner bracket 122 or the guide portion 102 in use, particularly when a reference line is pulled from the slot 144 across the guide portion 102 and the reference line is pulled taut against the cross member 134. Thus, the cross member 134 may more capably withstand substantial force which the tool may be subjected to in use.

A universal angle measurement and layout tool is therefore provided which overcomes the problems associated with existing tools and simplifies construction layout, evaluation and analysis by construction personnel. The tool may be provided at relatively low cost and is believed to benefit the construction process in a meaningful way. From professional to novice workers, the tool renders previously difficult tasks quite manageable, thereby saving, time, money, and aggravation to the construction process.

The tool 100 can be economically made in a number of processes, such as stamping, or numerous molding processes, or machining. The tool could be made of any suitable material, and may be produced in a variety of sizes and colors with varying scales and measurement indicia. This tool in its design for use on corners is self-adhering to the workpiece. When pulling on the string, the tool pulls snug onto the corner of the workpiece, providing a secure, and accurate line to the corner itself. Holes for pinning, barbs, or pinning apparatuses may be added to the tool to make it resistant to sliding when pulling along edges of applicable materials, and the tool could be made magnetic for steel applications.

While the invention has been described in terms of various specific embodiments, those skilled in the art will recognize that the invention can be practiced with modification within the spirit and scope of the claims.

## 12

What is claimed is:

1. An angle measurement and layout tool comprising:  
a support portion configured to seat against an edge of a construction workpiece; and  
a guide portion extending from said support portion, said guide portion having opposite faces with each face having measurement indicia thereon, said measurement indicia differently arranged on each of said opposite faces;

wherein said support portion includes a first slot and a second slot spaced from said first slot, said first and second slots positioned relative to a respective one of said opposite faces of said guide portion to accurately measure angles when a reference line is extended from each of said first and second slots to said corresponding face of said guide portion.

2. A tool in accordance with claim 1 wherein said support portion comprises a corner bracket configured to receive a corner of the workpiece.

3. A tool in accordance with claim 1 wherein said support portion is configured to be attached to an edge of the construction workpiece.

4. A tool in accordance with claim 3 wherein said support portion includes spring loaded fasteners configured to penetrate the edge of the construction workpiece.

5. A tool in accordance with claim 1 wherein said guide portion is substantially semicircular.

6. A tool in accordance with claim 1 wherein each of said opposite faces of said guide portion include angular measurement indicia and slope indicia.

7. A tool in accordance with claim 6 wherein said angular measurement indicia and said slope indicia occupies a different area on each of said opposite faces of said guide portion.

8. A tool in accordance with claim 6 wherein said support portion comprises a corner bracket and a cross member, each of said corner bracket and said cross member defining a respective reference point for each of said opposite faces of said portion, said reference points of said corner bracket and said cross member being different from one another.

9. A construction layout tool comprising:

a support portion configured to seat against an edge of a construction workpiece, said support portion comprising a flat ledge configured to seat against a workpiece and a corner bracket configured to receive a portion of the workpiece; and

a guide portion extending from said support portion, said guide portion having layout measurement indicia thereon; and

at least one extension arm attachable to said corner bracket, a portion of said extension arm extending parallel to said ledge.

10. A tool in accordance with claim 9 wherein said support portion further comprises fasteners configured to attach the tool to an edge of the workpiece.

11. A tool in accordance with claim 9 wherein said guide portion is substantially semicircular.

12. A tool in accordance with claim 9 wherein said guide portion comprises opposite faces, said support portion including a first slot and a second slot spaced from said first slot, said first and second slots positioned relative to a respective one of said opposite faces of said guide portion to accurately measure angles when a reference line is extended from each of said first and second slots to a corresponding face of said guide portion.

13. A tool in accordance with claim 9 wherein said guide portion comprises opposite faces, each of said opposite faces



## 13

of said guide portion including measurement indicia, said measurement indicia of each of said sides of said guide portion being different from one another.

14. A tool in accordance with claim 9 wherein said guide portion comprises opposite faces, each of said opposite faces of said guide portion including measurement indicia, said measurement indicia occupying a different area on each of said opposite faces of said guide portion.

15. A construction layout and angle measurement tool comprising:

a support portion comprising a flat ledge and a corner bracket extending from said ledge, each of said ledge and corner bracket defining a slot for a reference line, said slots of each of said ledge and said corner bracket being different from one another;

a guide portion extending from said support portion, said guide portion having opposite faces each having layout measurement indicia thereon, said measurement indicia of one of said faces corresponding to said slot of said ledge, and said measurement indicia of said other of said faces corresponding to said slot of said corner bracket, wherein when a reference line is extended through one of said slots and across the corresponding face of said guide portion, an orientation of the line with respect to said guide portion may accurately establish a desired layout or determine an unknown layout.

16. A tool in accordance with claim 15 wherein the tool is configured for attachment to a workpiece, whereby when the reference line is attached to the tool a single person may accurately establish a desired layout or determine an unknown layout.

17. A tool in accordance with claim 15 wherein said measurement indicia on one of said faces is configured for use with a flat edge of a workpiece, and said measurement indicia on the other of said faces is configured for use with a corner of the workpiece.

18. A tool in accordance with claim 15 wherein said ledge extends substantially perpendicular to said guide portion.

19. A tool in accordance with claim 15 wherein said measurement indicia of one of said faces comprises slope indicia having a first zero point and a second zero point, said slope indicia increasing from each of said zero points.

## 14

20. A tool in accordance with claim 19 wherein said slope indicia increases from each of the zero points to a predetermined slope indicia, and decreases toward each of the zero points from the predetermined slope indicia.

21. A tool in accordance with claim 20 wherein said predetermined slope indicia corresponds to a slope of 12 inches rise per foot.

22. A tool in accordance with claim 15 wherein said measurement indicia of one of said faces comprises slope indicia having a first zero point, a second zero point and a third zero point, said slope indicia increasing and decreasing between said first, second, and third zero points.

23. An angle measurement and layout tool comprising: a support portion configured to receive a corner of a workpiece; and

a guide portion extending from said support portion and marked with measurement indicia corresponding to the corner of the workpiece, said measurement indicia including at least one of an angular degree indicia and slope indicia,

wherein said guide portion comprises opposite faces, said support portion including a first slot and a second slot spaced from said first slot, said first and second slots positioned relative to a respective one of said opposite faces of said guide portion to accurately measure angles when a reference line is extended from each of said first and second slots to a corresponding face of said guide portion.

24. A tool in accordance with claim 23 wherein said measurement indicia comprises slope indicia having a first zero point and a second zero point, said slope indicia increasing from each of said zero points.

25. A tool in accordance with claim 23 wherein said measurement indicia comprises slope indicia having a first zero point and a second zero point, said slope indicia increasing from each of the zero points to a predetermined slope indicia, and decreasing toward each of the zero points from the predetermined slope indicia.

26. A tool in accordance with claim 23 wherein said slope indicia spans radially for approximately 90° on said guide portion.

\* \* \* \* \*